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Saipan Tribune

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Voter registration nears deadline. **PAGE 2**

Search continues for missing US Coast Guard crew. **PAGE 5**

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POLL RESULTS

Do you believe CUC when it says there will be no more power outages after Sept. 16?

Yes	8
No	122
Somewhat	7
Wait and see	24

Sunday, September 07, 2008

8 DAYS until Sept. 16, when Aggreko generators are to start working

INSIDE

Google Turns 10

When Larry Page and Sergey Brin founded Google Inc. on Sept. 7, 1998, they had little more than their ingenuity, four computers and an investor's $100,000 bet on their belief that an Internet search engine could change the world.

Business...Page 14

Wine Rally Winner

Hyatt Regency Saipan won the 9th Annual Pacific Wines and Spirits Wine Rally, allowing the hotel employees a chance to travel to wineries in Napa Valley, California.

Life & Style...Page 19

CNMI economy declines in second quarter

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

Key segments of the CNMI's economy such as banking, tourism, and car sales are showing signs of serious decline yet government spending is on the rise, according to a second

See CNMI on Page 4

Wife of missing Filipino worker arrives on Saipan

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Matubis

The wife of missing Filipino worker Alex Matubis arrived on Saipan yesterday morning to find out what happened to her husband.

Malou (short for Maria Luisia Fatima) Matubis, 39, said she has strong

See WIFE on Page 4

Senator frustrated with budget process

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Pangelinan

Sen. Maria T. Pangelinan has lamented the lack of cooperation from government agencies with the budget process.

Pangelinan, chairwoman of the Senate Committee

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Labor: $4.4M yearly in lost income under federalization

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

> *If federal officials are allowed to take over our labor functions, PL 110-229 is very specific; we will lose all labor revenues.*
>
> – Cinta M. Kaipat, deputy secretary of labor

The Department of Labor says the Commonwealth will lose about $4.4 million a year once the federal government takes over the local labor system.

Cinta M. Kaipat, deputy secretary of labor, said the department projects that it can generate about $6.1 million in revenues in the 2009 fiscal year and in each subsequent year. Factoring in its annual budget of $1.7 million, the Labor Department would bring in a net $4.4 million, or an average of $350,000 to $400,000 every month to government coffers.

"If federal officials are allowed to take over our labor functions, PL 110-229 is very specific; we will lose all labor revenues," Kaipat said in a letter to the Legislature. "So come June 1, 2009, the

See LABOR on Page 4

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Dozens of parents with their children trooped the National Office Supply along Beach Road to do their last-minute shopping for school supplies yesterday afternoon. The Public School System will begin the school year today, despite continuing power outages.

Local

Voter registration nears deadline

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Eligible voters have one week to register for this November's historic election. The last day for voter registration for the first-ever congressional delegate election is Monday, Sept. 15, 2008.

As of Sept. 2, 2008, only a little over 12,500 have registered to vote. This represents about 80 percent of the total registered voters during the midterm election last year.

Election District 1, which consists of San Antonio, San Vicente and Koblerville, has 3,423 voters. Election District 2, made up of Chalan Kanoa and Susupe, has 986 voters. Election District 3 has 2,600 voters, including 1,907 in Garapan and 693 in Oleai.

Tanapag, San Roque, Capital Hill and the Northern Islands, which comprise Election District 4, have 1,355 voters. The Kagman subdivisions, which make up Election District 5, have 1,740 voters.

Tinian has 1,122 voters and Rota has 1,351 voters.

A person is eligible to vote who, on Nov. 4, 2008, is 18 years of age or older, is domiciled in the Commonwealth, has resided in the Commonwealth for 120 days prior to the day of the election, is not serving a sentence for a felony conviction, has not been declared by a court to be judicially insane, and is either a citizen or national of the United States as defined in the NMI Constitution.

Previously registered voters who failed to cast a ballot in 2007 have been taken off the voters' list. They must re-register to vote this year.

People qualified to vote may register during government workdays from 7:30am to 4:30pm at the Commonwealth Election Commission's office at 1313, Anatahan Drive, Capital Hill, Saipan.

Eligible voters on Rota may register with Miranda V. Manglona or Josepha A. Barcinas. Tinian residents may register with Jose P. Kiyoshi or Mary B. Diaz. Residents of the islands north of Saipan may contact the Commission via e-mail or the government radios maintained at EMO.

Voter registration is also conducted from 9am to 3pm on Saturday at PriceCostco in Oleai, Saipan. The last day for the PriceCostco voter registration is Sept. 13, 2008.

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Relief to jobless former CNMI scholars

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial on Friday signed into law a bill that would offer loan payment relief to jobless former scholars of the CNMI government.

The new Commonwealth law holds off college loan payments for scholars who are unemployed because there are no government jobs available or because positions they have applied for are filled by foreign workers.

The new law grants forbearance to any off-island scholar during the first two years after graduation if he cannot find a job in his field of study. The scholar will not be charged interest during the period of forbearance.

Also under the new law, government scholars who have served in the military will no longer be required to return and work in the CNMI for a set period of time. They will be considered to have satisfied that requirement.

"[The] Legislature is cognizant that in times of fiscal austerity, reduction in force or because of the government reliance on foreign national workers, employment in the private or public sector may be unattainable or unavailable to returning students," the measure states the basis for its passage.

The CNMI Scholarship Office has opposed the measure, saying it unnecessary and unfair to other scholars who have repaid their students loans. Scholarship administrator Merissa Rasa noted that there is already a process in place for granting forbearance to scholarship or loan recipients who are unable to repay the CNMI government due to some hardship.

Rasa said the Scholarship Office is already struggling to hold scholarship and loan recipients accountable for their obligations to return to the CNMI to work and or pay back what they owe. The legislation, she added, would weaken the scholarship program even more.

Former government scholars now owe the Scholarship Office about $4 million.

Clarification:

On Wednesday, the *Saipan Tribune* published a story, *Local Shrimp Firm Warns Against Chinese Imports,* in which Saipan Aquaculture, a shrimp farming company, presented concerns about chemicals federal inspectors have previously found in seafood shipped to the United States from China.

Accompanying the article was a photograph of a bag of Dragon brand shrimp, which is a product of China. The intent of the photograph was to establish that Chinese shrimp is sold in the CNMI, as sources in the article had suggested.

The photograph was not in any way intended to imply that the particular brand of shrimp shown is contaminated with any harmful chemicals. The *Saipan Tribune* later reviewed health certificates for imports of Dragon brand shrimp provided by a local distributor and found no cause for concern.

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Miura's lawyers ready for hearing, but are considering another delay

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Attorney Bruce Berline, one of the counsels of Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura, said yesterday they would talk with the prosecution whether or not to postpone again the hearing on Saipan following Los Angeles Country judge's announcement he would issue a decision by Sept. 26 on Miura's motion to dismiss murder and conspiracy charges.

At a press briefing inside his office, Berline said during Friday's hearing in L.A. Superior Court Judge Steven Van Sicklen placed the motion under advisement and set another hearing for Sept. 26 at 1:30pm.

Berline said Sicklen, however, specifically ordered no briefing by either party and that he will give his ruling at that time.

"The Sept. 26 hearing will be solely for the judge to render his decision in this matter and we go from there. Sept. 26 is kind of a long lay off but there is nothing we can do about that," he said.

Berline said they don't know what they are going to do with the scheduled Sept. 12 hearing on Saipan.

Miura

The lawyer said he spoke with Miura's counsel in L.A., Mark Geragos, about the Sept. 12 hearing.

"We will be talking with Mr. Warfield (assistant attorney general Jeffery) about that," he said.

Berline said Miura is not going anywhere as Judge Sicklen ruled that their client does not need to be present in L.A.

"So until Judge Sicklen issues his order nobody is coming from California to pick him up. So we'll see. We certainly talk about our options with Mr. Warfield," he said.

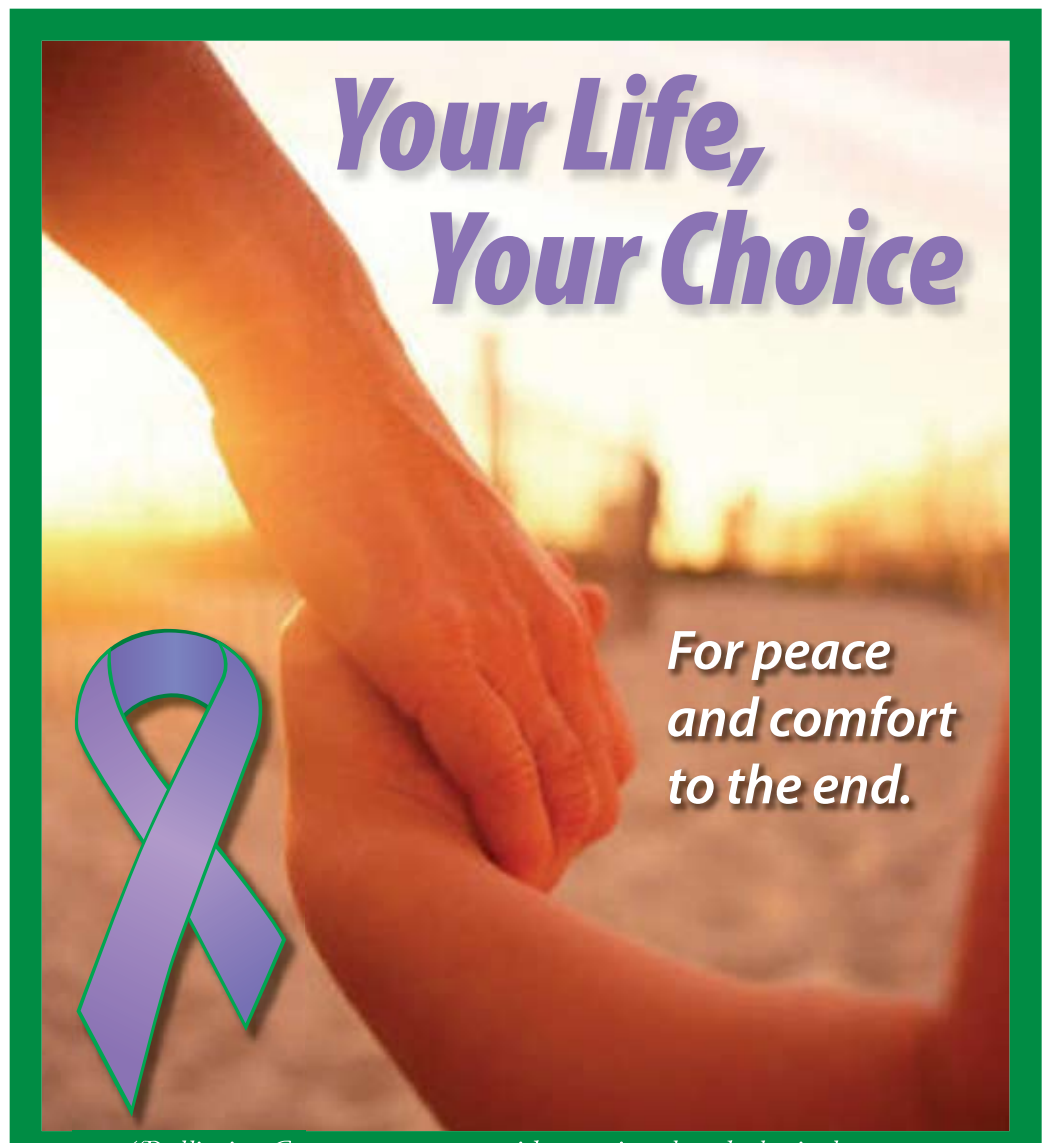
Berline said as of yesterday's press briefing, due to frequent outages Warfield had failed to submit the CNMI's government's response to their petition for habeas corpus.

"If the court wants to go through with the Sept. 12 we don't have a problem with that. We'll talk about that in the couple of days and come to a decision whether we want to go forward on the 12th or not," he added.

The Superior Court postponed many times the hearing and the filing deadline on the petition for habeas corpus following stipulations by Miura's counsels and the prosecution.

Miura is accused of conspiring to kill his wife, who was shot when they were visiting L.A. in 1981. Miura was convicted of murder in Japan, but the verdict was overturned in 1998 by the country's high courts.

The 61-year-old Miura was arrested in connection with the murder while on a business trip to Saipan last February. Miura remains in jail as he fights his extradition to LA. from Saipan.



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Bill proposes homestead lots for Northern Islands residents

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Residents of the Northern Islands will be eligible for homestead lots under a bill introduced in the House of Representatives.

Rep. Justo S. Quitugua has sponsored legislation that would create village and agricultural homesteading programs for the islands of Sarigan, Anatahan, Alamagan, Pagan, and Agrigan.

Currently, residents of these islands do not hold deeds or titles to the land they have lived on for decades. Although many of them qualify to receive village and agricultural homestead lots, they have not been granted homestead permits.

The homestead program, which is in place on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian, assists needy residents to purchase homes and lots in order to construct safe and decent housing.

To qualify, a person must be of Northern Marianas descent and at least 18 years old. A person can own no more than one homestead lot.

Under the proposed legislation, Northern Islands residents who meet voter residency requirements will be given priority in granting homestead permits. As of Sept. 2, 2008, there are 51 registered voters in the Northern Islands.

The bill also seeks to exempt Northern Islands homesteaders from the requirements set forth in existing law.

Under the law, homestead recipient must complete a three-year homesteading period before he or she can receive a compliance certificate and quitclaim deed. A homesteader must build a house and occupy it within the two years after the homestead permit is issued. He or she must continue occupying that house throughout the third year.

Quitugua in his bill said these regulations should be waived for Northern Islands residents. "The situation of the islands north of Saipan, which lack transportation and communication services, makes it extremely difficult for the residents of these islands to communicate and or commute to the island of Saipan to get materials and supplies; and to take care of their other needs, such as, to claim for the properties they have lived on for years," he said.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

'Meet John Davis' forum

There will be a public forum for the community to meet with John H. Davis Jr., who is a candidate for delegate to the U.S. Congress.

The forum will be held Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2008, 4:30pm - 6:30pm, at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

"You are invited to meet with John H. Davis, Jr., listen to his views on what he can offer as your Delegate to the U.S. Congress, and join in the discussion with any questions or concerns that you may have."

Contact Jeanne Rayphand at 287-9807 for additional information. ***(PR)***

THS PTSA meeting set

The Tinian High School PTSA will have a meeting on Thursday, Sept. 11, 2008, at 7pm, in the THS school cafeteria. We are encouraging all parents/legal guardians' to attend this first meeting of the School Year 2008-2009. Call 237-4165 for any questions. ***(PR)***

MHS calendar of activities

Sept. 8 First Day of School. Students report to Homeroom at 7:50am. Refer to Homeroom Listing in school bulletin board (Bldg A). Homeroom List will be posted on Sept. 2 for advance viewing by students/parents. Class schedules will be distributed on the first day of school. For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. ***(PR)***

SENATOR

From Page 1

on Fiscal Affairs, said many agencies are unresponsive to her committee's calls for specific information on their budget requests.

She said that personnel costs in particular require a closer look, given that over two thirds of the government's budget will go to payroll. Personnel costs are expected to comprise $105 million of the government's $156.7 million budget for the 2009 fiscal year.

That is why, she said, lawmakers need department heads to justify their requests for full-time employees and their compensation plan.

"They cannot even respond to a simple request to confirm the positions in their department. How could they expect us to think they can run a department? It's all very frustrating," said Pangelinan.

The new fiscal year is coming in less than one month. To date, the Legislature and the administration have not passed a new budget.

The Legislature and administration are now looking at a resource level of $156.7 million, a decrease of $1.7 million from the original revenue projection for the 2009 fiscal year.

The new estimate factors in the $1.7 million income from the Marianas Public Land Trust which has been earmarked for the payment of debts owed by the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

The updated revenue forecast is reflected in a resolution introduced in the House of Representatives last week. The resolution, once adopted, will set the government spending limit for the period between Oct. 1, 2008 and Sept. 30, 2009.

No appropriation was passed for fiscal year 2008. The government is currently operating on the FY2007 budget level of $163 million, a figure largely believed to be more than the available resources.

WIFE

From Page 1

feelings that her 47-year-old husband is still very much alive.

It was the same statement given by the Department of Public Safety's Criminal Investigation Division chief Major Edward H. Manalili saying that police have so far found no traces of foul play for Matubis' disappearance.

Malou met with reporters at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Garapan yesterday afternoon and talked about several issues including what she said uncollected salaries that might have contributed to his husband's depression.

She was accompanied by Irene Tantadio, president of United Workers Movement, who encouraged her to come here and vowed to support her during her stay.

Malou, who has worked here several years ago, said she is here on a 30-day tourist visa.

The missing worker's wife said her husband might have been somewhere with somebody else. She said Alex, a draftsman and cartographer for his employer Candido Castro, has many friends on Rota or somebody might be keeping him.

She even appealed to Alex to come out so that they could talk whatever problems he is encountering.

Less than a month before he was reported missing on June 28, Matubis went home for vacation in San Pedro, Laguna (just South of Manila), on May 14.

Malou and Alex have two kids, who are 16 and 14 years old. They have been the past 15 years.

She said Alex was so sad because he is leaving them again but he could not do anything because he always thinks of his children's future especially that the eldest is now in college.

She also said that her husband was thinking of transferring to another company because of some financial problems with his employer.

She said that her problem right now is she doesn't know how to start with this because she has no record at all.

She said she just hope that his employer would help her. Malou said Alex went back to Saipan on May 28.

Malou said that Alex called on the day before he was supposed to go to Tinian on June 28.

"We have no problems. Alex is a jolly person," she said in Tagalog.

She recalled having reminded her husband not to forget taking his medicine because Alex has hypertension and that he has a supply of vitamins good for four months and other medicine that would keep his condition.

On July 30, Minda Castro, who is the wife of his employer called Malou to inform about her missing husband.

She said she didn't believe about it first besides even the police cannot declare yet that he is missing because it was not yet 72 hours.

Malou also recalled that Alex even sent her money, including his savings from the bank, shortly before he was reported missing.

The money was intended to pay house rentals and other expenses.

She said Alex promised to her to call when he is already on Tinian, which he never did.

Malou is planning to visit the Philippine Consulate Office, police station, and radio stations for help as well as to her husband's employer.

Malou said her husband's parents are not yet aware of what happened to Alex.

She said she fears something wrong might happen to her mother-in-law, who has high blood pressure.

Malou has this to say to Alex: "If you are still alive, please call to our home. If you already know that I'm here on Saipan, please contact me so that we can talk whatever problems you have."

Should anyone know of his whereabouts, you can contact Irene Tantadio at 322-8897.

Police believes that Matubis is still alive since, after his disappearance was reported in the papers on Aug. 8, he was later sighted in the Marpi area, leading to the discovery of his blue Toyota pickup truck near the Kalabera Cave on Aug. 19.

The police official noted that the hood of the truck was still warm when investigators found the vehicle.

The CID chief is asking anybody in the community to call his office at 664-9042/45, 911 or the Crime Stoppers Hotline at 234-7272 for any sightings of Matubis.

CNMI

From Page 1

quarter economic report issued Friday by the Department of Commerce.

"It's clear that our economy is going through a difficult period right now," James Arenovski, president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, said in an interview, adding that Saipan's unreliable electric power system, private sector fears over the pending federal takeover of the CNMI's immigration rules, and the slow death of the local garment manufacturing industry have all contributed to the "instability and uncertainty" businesses are experiencing.

Spokesman for Gov. Benigno Fitial, Charles Reyes, echoed those sentiments, saying the recent arrival of new emergency electricity generators on Saipan could ease some of the troubles the private sector has endured through 2008.

"The game plan right now is to deal with the most pressing issue, to provide a stable power supply, and we're going to do that with the Aggreko deal," Reyes said, adding the Fitial administration is also vying to "mitigate the enormous devastation" the administration anticipates federal immigration controls will cause in the CNMI.

In the 16-page report, Commerce notes, for example, that the amount of money deposited in local banks fell an estimated $37 million beneath that seen in the first quarter of the year to $478,850,000. The amount loaned by the CNMI's banks has dropped by about $7 million compared to the first quarter to $ 149,140,000.

Automotive sales—a major indicator of the economy's health—are down by 24 percent below first quarter figures, the report says, with a mere 155 new cars and 71 new cars sold in the second quarter. This decline represents a 13-percent drop compared to the second quarter of 2007.

One of the primary economic engines in the local economy, the tourism industry, took a major hit in the second quarter due to a 15-percent drop in visitor arrivals below first quarter numbers. Commerce reports tourist arrivals are down to an estimated 94,000. This marks a 10-percent increase over visitor arrivals in the same period last year, however, but that modest gain pales in comparison with the major decline in tourism the CNMI has seen in recent years. In 2004 alone, for example, the CNMI played host to more than 589,000 visitors while last year it received an estimated 389,000.

Average hotel rates in the CNMI are also down roughly 8 percent beneath first quarter figures while hotel occupancy rates have fallen by more than 19 percent.

Meanwhile, imports to the CNMI have risen by more than 6,000 tons over last quarter with imports of petroleum, oil, and lubricants showing the largest jump. These gains are roughly 9,000 tons less than the amount of imports seen in the second quarter of 2007.

The value of exports from the CNMI, however, declined in the second quarter by more than 46 percent below the first quarter's total to an estimated 25 million, 67 percent less than the value of exports seen in the second quarter of 2007.

In contrast to the declines seen in private sector figures, government spending has nonetheless risen during the second quarter by almost 6 percent over the first quarter's total and by more than 22 percent over the same period in 2007, the report notes. In the first quarter of 2008, government spending totaled $43,900,000. In the second, the government spent $46.4 million. Overall government spending, however, has fallen in recent years. For example, the report notes that in 2005, the government spent $224,100,000 but in 2006, that figure slipped to $195,600,000. In 2007, government spending totaled $162,700,000.

LABOR

From Page 1

Commonwealth will be short some $400,000 every month in its budget."

But some lawmakers are not convinced by the department's claim.

Rep. Diego T. Benavente, chairman of the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations, said the "federalization" of labor and immigration will save the government some money as well.

"There will be some offsetting of what money we'll lose with what we will save from not having to deal with the foreign workers," said Benavente, whose committee is drafting a legislative report on the administration's plan to sue the U.S. government over the new immigration law.

Rep. Tina Sablan, a supporter of federalization, echoed Benavente's statement and urged the Labor Department to provide lawmakers with a detailed computation of potential savings from federalization.

"Until we get a more balanced picture of what the impact will, I will consider this claim as nothing more than propaganda designed to get us to support the lawsuit," she said.

In her letter, Kaipat said the Labor Department is able to generate money faster now more than ever. The new automated processing system allows the department to collect fees faster. Fines are being collected from the old labor cases that have been resolved recently. And a more efficient "barred list" process ensures that employers who owe fines do not get services from the Labor Department until those fines are paid.

At the same time, Kaipat said, Labor has taken steps to streamline its operations. A new website has been installed to cut costs. Personnel are being cross-trained so that every staff member can do at least two jobs.

Kaipat said all the revenue generated by the Labor Department will be lost once federalization goes into effect. "There will be no negotiating about this loss of revenue. It has been commanded by Congress," she said.

Unlike in Guam or the U.S. Virgin Islands, federally collected fees will not be turned over the Commonwealth government, she added.

Search continues for missing US Coast Guard crew

HONOLULU—The U.S. Coast Guard continues to search the ocean south of Oahu today for one its own, a missing aviator from a Coast Guard HH-65 Dolphin helicopter which crashed Thursday.

The search area extends 40 miles off shore and stretches 35 miles from Barbers Point to Diamond Head. Coast Guard and Honolulu Fire Department search crews have conducted more than 60 sorties, or missions, in the search area, covering more than 2,500 square miles.

"We are essentially saturating the search area with as many assets as possible," said Rear Adm. Manson K. Brown, the Fourteenth Coast Guard District Commander. "We are extremely grateful for the assistance from HFD, the Navy, Air Force, Hawaii Air National Guard, state DLNR and Honolulu Police Department during this trying time."

Coast Guard air crews from Air Stations San Francisco, Humboldt Bay, Calif., and Kodiak, Alaska, have been flown out to augment search crews here to maintain the Coast Guard's ability to respond to other calls during the search. In addition, U.S. Navy Combat Task Group 32 (a P-3 squadron) and the Navy's Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 37—both at Marine Corps Base Kaneohe—are on standby to provide search and rescue support for other missions in Hawaii and the Pacific.

Coast Guard assets on scene Saturday in the search area were the 378-foot high endurance cutter Rush, with a crew of 140, the 87-foot patrol boats Ahi and Kittiwake, with crews of 11 and crews aboard 41-foot and 47-foot motor lifeboats from Station Honolulu.

"Our hearts are with the loved ones of our lost aviators," said Brown, who visited with cutter and Station Honolulu crews today. "But, we have an active search and we'll continue while there's a chance of survival."

Small pieces of the downed HH-65 were recovered by the cutter crews today and were taken to the Coast Guard's Sand Island base. The pieces will be transferred to a secure hangar at Hickam Air Force Base where it will be examined by Caost Guard investigators. The pieces were exterior panels of the fuselage.

The three aviators recovered from the downed HH-65 Thursday night and pronounced dead at Queen's Medical Center were all Coast Guard aviation veterans:

Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Wischmeier, 44, of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., had served at Air Station Barbers Point since July 2004 and had 19 years Coast Guard experience. Previously, he had served at Air Station Miami, Air Station Kodiak, Alaska, and at Group New Orleans. He went through Naval Flight School in 1991. He was a pilot aboard the downed HH-65.

Petty Officer 1st Class David Skimin, 38, of San Bernardino, Calif., had served at Air Station Barbers Point since June 2005 and had 16 years Coast Guard experience. Previously, he had served at Air Station Kodiak, Alaska, and at Barbers Point in the late 1990s, Station Golden Gate (San Francisco, Calif.) and Station Freeport (Freeport, Texas) and Group Galveston, Texas. He was the rescue swimmer aboard the downed HH-65.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Joshua Nichols, 27, of Gloucester, Va., had served at Air Station Barbers Point since July 2007 and had eight years Coast Guard experience. Previously, he had served at Aviation Training Center Mobile, Ala., Air Station San Francisco and the cutter Morgenthau, home ported in Alameda, Calif. He was the flight mechanic aboard the HH-65. ***(USCG)***

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Frank L. Gibson delivers his presentation on "The Human Resources Role in Disaster Management" during the Saipan Chamber of Commerce workshop at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe this past weekend. The workshop was intended to prepare local businesses for potential emergencies in observance of CNMI Disaster Preparedness Month.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

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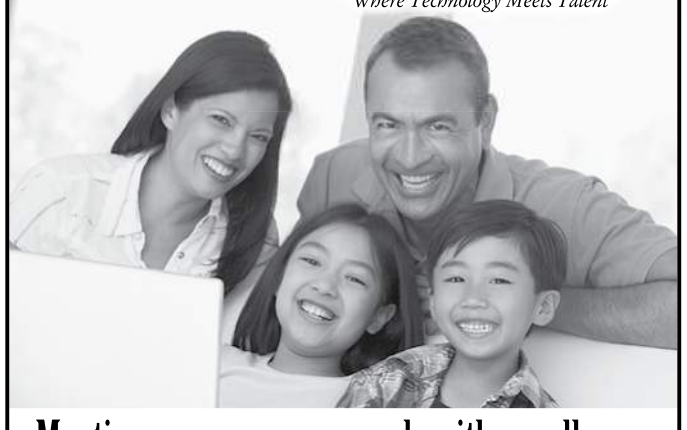

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Island Snapshots

NEW GENERATORS
Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s crew work on hooking up the new Aggreko generators to the distribution grid inside the CUC container yard in Lower Base.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

DARING BURGLARY
Field Operations Shop director Joe Tenorio shows the tank of the military tractor were burglars drained gallons of diesel.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

TEA CEREMONY
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Gov. Benigno Fitial and other dignitaries join members of the Tanko-kai, the youth division of Japanese traditional tea ceremony association, as they chant a prayer for the souls of all World War II victims during the Tea ceremony or Sado Urasenke Tanko-kai Memorial Ceremony at the Last Command Post in Marpi Saturday morning. The 32 members from Kyoto arrived on Saipan Friday and are set to depart the island on Sept 9.

'WHO I AM'
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
CNMI Public School System teachers participate on a game called "Who I Am" during the PSS Statewide Professional Development Day at the Garapan Elementary School.

HARD AT WORK
Linemen from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s power division install power lines that will connect to the new Aggreko generators in Lower Base.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND
1980
"Investing For The Future Financial Security Of Our Members"

BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS
Request For Proposal No. RF09-053

OPENING DATE: **SEPTEMBER 8, 2008**
CLOSING DATE: **OCTOBER 23, 2008**

The Board of Trustees, Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund (Fund), is soliciting sealed bids from private companies to conduct general maintenance repairs on the Fund building on Capitol Hill, Saipan. To receive the RFP packet, e-mail, fax, or mail your request to:

Mark A. Aguon, Administrator
Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund
P.O. Box 501247 CK
Saipan, MP 96950-1247
Fax: 670/664-8080
E-mail: administrator01@nmiretirement.com

The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in a proposal if doing so is in the best interest of the Fund. All proposals shall become the property of the NMI Retirement Fund.

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 234-5498 ext. 2300/01/02 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: procurement@nmcnet.edu, Website: www.nmcnet.edu

Announcement - Invitation for Bid
NMC No.: IFB 08-004
PURCHASE OF THREE (3) NEW AUTOMOBILES

The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Services Department (CREES) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement of three (3) new automobile vehicles to be delivered on or before September 30th, 2008. A bidder does not have to submit a bid proposal for all vehicles. In order to be considered for this transaction, all persons, firms or corporations responding to this request must provide information requested in the specifications and scope of work. Any bid received that does not provide the requested information may be rejected. Bids rejected will not be returned to the owner, but the owner will be notified.

Due Date/Time: **Monday, September 15th, 2008 10:00 a.m.**
PUBLIC BID OPENING: **Monday, September 15th, 2008 at 10:30 a.m.**

Specifications and Scope of Work may be picked up at the NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, As Terlaje Campus, Saipan, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8: 30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:30 p.m.

Bid Packages are due Monday, September 15th, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L 2nd, Floor. Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with NMC Procurement Regulations. In accordance with Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, **"Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders** in this procurement. This procurement is funded, wholly, from federal sources. For bidders located **outside of the CNMI**: You may request a copy of the Invitation for Bid via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Duane R.T. Sablan (duanes@nmcnet.edu)

All bidders are hereby notified that the Northern Marianas College and CNMI Government will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the bidder to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the bidder. All submittals shall become the property of NMC and will not be returned.

Approved by the following:

/ss/Duane R.T. Sablan
NMC, Acting Procurement Officer

/ss/Ross S. Manglona
Director, NMC CREES

Matson says it will drop fuel surcharge

HONOLULU—Matson Navigation Co. on Friday said it will lower its fuel surcharge by 4.75 percent beginning on Sept. 21.

The drop in price will take the fuel surcharge in Hawaii from 42.25 percent to 37.5 percent. The decrease in the surcharge will also drop the rates for Guam, Micronesia and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to 39 percent.

Matson said the decrease is a result of lower prices being charged for the fuel its ships use. Crude oil prices began falling in August, marking the first time in more than a year that fuel prices have retreated significantly.

"Matson is very pleased to finally have the opportunity to lower its fuel surcharge following an extended period of record high fuel related costs in the world oil market," Matson vice president of Ocean Services Dave Hoppes said in a written statement.

Hoppes said that the company is beginning to see fuel prices drop while crude oil prices have been in decline.

The drop in price would range from $115 to $180 per container for customers, Matson officials said.

Matson is owned by Honolulu-based Alexander & Baldwin Inc. and is Hawaii's largest ocean shipper.

Tahiti protesters stage 'backwards' march

Political instability, economic recession underscored

SUVA, Fiji (Oceania Flash)—A political party in French Polynesia has found an unusual, but efficient way of pushing its point home by holding a protest march with all participants asked to literally walk backwards.

The unusual march was being organised by local Porinetia Ora party.

Its main objective was to illustrate in the plainest way the fact that, in its view, French Polynesia's ongoing political instability made the French Pacific country "go backwards".

To further strike the stunned onlookers in downtown Pape'ete, and bring home the other key idea of "mourning" for the country, all participants to the otherwise peaceful demonstration (an estimated forty persons) had been asked to dress in black, local media reported.

They were also brandishing placards to reinforce their message in writing and that read: "Our country is in mourning, our country is going backwards".

Other placards were directly referring to nepotism and cronyism across the political spectrum.

Recent statistics in French Polynesia have pointed to an ongoing economic crisis, which was perceived to be a direct consequence of a significant drop in tourism arrivals and a high cost of living that has also recently forced the local government to increase the local minimum wage to 145,306 French Pacific Francs (1,851 US dollars) with effect on September 1, 2008.

The recent measure was said to be a direct response to the "inflationist context French Polynesia is currently undergoing due to the impact of the world rise in fuel and commodities", the Cabinet meeting heard.

The indexation was therefore said to be aimed at "maintaining the purchasing power of the population".

Latest statistics released last month in French Polynesia have also shown that the French Pacific territory has now officially entered into an economic recession period.

Tourism has been at a standstill for the past five years and the yearly number of arrivals has not moved away from the 200 to 220,000 mark.

This was aggravated by the global fuel price rise, which in turn made a ticket to French Polynesia even less affordable for holidaymakers, especially those from Northern America and Europe, French Polynesia's key source markets, French Polynesia's statistical institute (ISPF) said in its latest bulletin.

Other casualties in the current economic downturn include the fishing and the black pearl farming industries.

The institute also points out that business confidence seems to have eroded in the past few months, with a significant drop in the building sector.

Unemployment rates are currently at some 11.7 per cent of the total population.

Hardest hit are the young slices of the population, especially those school leavers entering the job market, ISPF said, adding that in this age class (20-25 years old), the unemployment rate peaked at 27 percent..

Business leaders have, since last year, also expressed concern at French Polynesia's ongoing political instability, which has been a backdrop in this French Pacific dependency for the past five years.

They have also warned that the latest rise in the minimum wage could force several companies to lay off staff, because of the economic burden and the currently gloomy business prospects.

CUC LOAD SHEDDING SCHEDULE

The revised load-shedding schedule is as follows:

8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Feeder-2: Entire Grid
Portions of Lower Base, CPA (Seaport), Beach Road Garapan south to San Jose Intersection
Feeder-4: Entire Grid
Portions of Lower Base, Sadog Tasi, Capital Hill, Kagman and portions of Papago (Botanical Garden)
Feeder-7: Entire Grid
Lower Base industrial area, north to Tanapag, Achugao, San Roque, As Matuis and Marpi

11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Feeder-3: Second partial
Upper Gualo Rai, Taro Sue
Kiya-4: Entire Grid
Chalan Kiya, San Jose, Oleai, Susupe, Mount Carmel and south to portions of Chalan Kanoa
Kiya 1: Entire Grid
As Terlaje, NMC,Botanical Garden, Portions of Fina Sisu, Lower Dandan, Upper Dandan, Homestead, Isley Field, Kanat Tabla

2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Feeder-1 Second partial
Upper Navy Hill, Upper MIHA, 99 Cents Store
Kiya-2: Entire Grid
As Lito, Koblerville, As Gonno, San Antonio and Afetnas, portions of Fina Sisu

5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Feeder-3: Second partial
Upper Gualo Rai, Taro Sue
Kiya-4: Entire Grid
Chalan Kiya, San Jose, Oleai, Susupe, Mount Carmel and south to portions of Chalan Kanoa
Kiya 1: Entire Grid
As Terlaje, NMC,Botanical Garden, Portions of Fina Sisu, Lower Dandan, Upper Dandan, Homestead, Isley Field, Kanat Tabla

8:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Feeder-1 Second partial
Upper Navy Hill, Upper MIHA, 99 Cent store
Kiya-2: Entire Grid
As Lito, Koblerville, As Gonno, San Antonio and Afetnas, portions of Fina Sisu

11:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m. Feeder-3: Second partial
Upper Gualo Rai, Taro Sue
Kiya-4: Entire Grid
Chalan Kiya, San Jose, Oleai, Susupe, Mount Carmel and south to portions of Chalan Kanoa
Kiya 1: Entire Grid
As Terlaje, NMC,Botanical Garden, Portions of Fina Sisu, Lower Dandan, Upper Dandan, Homestead, Isley Field, Kanat Tabla

2:00 a.m.-5:00 a.m. Feeder-2: Entire Grid
Portions of Lower Base, CPA (Seaport), Beach Road Garapan south to San Jose Intersection
Feeder-4: Entire Grid
Portions of Lower Base, Sadog Tasi, Capital Hill, Kagman and portions of Papago (Botanical Garden)
Feeder-7: Entire Grid
Lower Base industrial area, north to Tanapag, Achugao, San Roque, As Matus and Marpi

5:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Feeder-1 Second partial
Upper Navy Hill, Upper MIHA, 99 Cent store
Kiya-2: Entire Grid
As Lito, Koblerville, As Gonno, San Antonio and Afetnas, portions of Fina Sisu

Source: Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

Bell nears final segments of swim around Saipan

Editor's Note: On June 9, 2008, James Bell celebrated his 70th birthday swimming the five-mile channel between Saipan and Tinian. It was a feat he last achieved in July 1981, when he marked his retirement from the U.S. Navy by swimming alone from Saipan to Tinian. His next goal is to cross the Torres Strait from Papua New Guinea to the Australian mainland. To practice for this arduous journey, Bell will be swimming along the coastline of Saipan, with the goal of eventually circling the entire island. Here, he will be sharing his experience with Saipan Tribune readers as he attempts the feat.

OLD MAN IN THE SEA

By JAMES BELL
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Third part of a series

The interval between my reports has increased as I make my way down the windward coast of Saipan. I have begun to experience postponed attempts due to wave heights, something I did not have to deal with on the other side of the island. The trade winds came back for a while and that change increased the height of the swell moving in from the east. When I looked at swell, pushed by a brisk onshore breeze, breaking on the reef and surging up over the wave cut benches, I realized I could get over the reef by finding a rip channel with an outgoing current or by jumping from a bench between waves, but those tricks do not work when you are coming back over the reef. Coming over a wave pounded reef you have never seen before after a 6 or 7 hour swim can be a rough way to end your day. These are the arguments I used when talking myself into going home and trying again on another day.

On August 8th, I made my second attempt at getting out of Bird Island Bay. I started the venture with a hike which ended at 5 1/2 miles with the offer of a ride from David Selepao. At the bay, conditions were not great, but it was time to get moving. I found a rip channel on the north side of Bird Island and was pulled through the reef by the outgoing current. The swim south was a continuation of cliffs rising from wave cut benches, occasional caves extending under the cliffs and infrequent breaks in the cliffs where intermittent streams flow to the sea. Where the cliffs were lower in height lush tropical vegetation was visible climbing the slopes above the cliffs to the skyline. It was slow going in the chop created by incoming swell meeting reflected waves coming back from the cliffs. This chop occasionally created a wave in my face and a mouth full of water. After five hours I began to feel waterlogged and thought I probably had absorbed a month's worth of minimum daily salt requirement. I began to see signs of human activity late in the swim as I traversed the seaward side of Kingfisher Golf Course.

I had been swimming for over six hours and was tired. I got my hopes up with several indentations in the cliff line, but instead of ending in a beach, they ended with waves crashing against rock piles, so I pressed on. At 6pm I rounded a point and found myself looking at Jeffreys Beach at the end of a rather narrow canyon through the cliffs. It would be dark in less than an hour and light was already failing in the canyon. I was in no position to shop around, so I headed straight for the reef. The first breaking wave propelled me toward the beach, but the second wave dumped me on the reef on my right shoulder. It was smooth rock, not coral and sea urchins, so there was no damage done. It was almost dark by the time I hiked out to the road. I had swum 5.18 miles in 7 hours and 6 minutes and now resumed the pavement pounding part of the trip. Four miles later, I gratefully accepted the offer of a ride back to my hotel with LDS missionaries, Elders Smith and Peterson.

Getting out of Jeffreys Beach proved to be more of a challenge than exiting Bird Island Bay. Once again, my young friend, Daniel Villegas, came to the rescue providing transportation to the rather remote beach on two occasions. Daniel left for college in Hawaii so his family got me to the beach for my third attempt on the 23rd of August. Rik and Janel Villegas and their children Kiana, Alicia and Jason hiked with me down the heavily rutted road with knee deep mud holes filled by recent heavy rains. I did not attempt to cross the reef, but made an entry from a wave cut bench making my leap of faith between waves.

I saw only one shark, a blacktip, on my swim south from Bird Island, but the trip south from Jeffries Beach proved much more productive in shark sightings. In a one-hour period, I saw six blacktips. They are harmless and often curious reef sharks and I think the six sightings could probably be accounted for by two sharks making multiple passes. Sharks are usually rather discrete, gliding slowly by looking at you out of the corner of their eye. One of the blacktips came by, then turned, stopped swimming and looked directly at me in amazement. He went for a friend and they were back in about 10 minutes. The friend was being typically aloof, but the curious shark, once again, stopped and stared at me. I could imagine his friend saying to him "It's not polite to stare."

Early in the swim I passed a small inlet with a well known rock formation called "Old Man by the Sea" because of the resemblance to the head of an old man. I guess the old guy must have been gazing inland, because from the sea side I saw no such resemblance. Given the choice, I would rather continue to be the old man in the sea.

Sea turtles were more plentiful than sharks with seven of the beautiful creatures passing by. I extended my hand to one - he advanced cautiously, then thought better of it and swam away.

Farther south on the east coast beaches are encountered with good coral development seaward of the reefs. The signs of human habitation become more frequent in contrast to the miles of deserted shoreline that must look much as they did when the navigators of centuries ago viewed them for the first time By mid afternoon, I rounded Laolao Kattan Point, a sharp pointed extension to the island which seems to attract waves. Progress in the confused seas was slow, but once beyond the point, my field of view to the south was filled with Forbidden Island, my destination. Forbidden Island is an elongated point which has been separated from the island of Saipan by erosion. It is actually joined to the main island by a slightly submerged shelf studded with large rocks. It has a bad reputation because people wading across the shelf are exposed to waves and the possibility of the "one big wave" sweeping them into the sea. In the most recent tragedy, four visitors to Saipan were swept from the shelf. Three were drowned and the fourth barely survived the experience. I think tragedy occurs because people regard the sea as a great threat and feel their lives depend on getting out of the sea as fast as possible. They push themselves to exhaustion trying to get back through the waves and across the rocks or reef. The danger is in the rocks or reef and waves, not the sea. It is much better to get away from the area of breaking waves, stay together and wait for help.

My crossing of the reef at Forbidden Island was an easy one, completing a 4.9 mile swim of 6 hours and 41 minutes duration. I was happy to see my welcoming committee composed of Rik Villegas, his daughter, Lakell, and their friends, Manny and Christina Carula, coming down the trail.

My crossing of the reef at Forbidden Island was an easy one, completing a 4.9 mile swim of 6 hours and 41 minutes duration. I was happy to see my welcoming committee composed of Rik Villegas, his daughter, Lakell, and their friends, Manny and Christina Carula, coming down the trail. The trip back up the steep trail can be more hazardous to your health than Forbidden Island. Stretches are steep enough to require ropes for assistance.

There was no delay for the next segment of my swim. On the 29th of August, Rik and Janel saw me most of the way down the trail to Forbidden Island and then waited to see that I got over the reef all right. Once again a small rip channel provided access to the open water beyond the reef. On that day, I would traverse most of the shoreline of Laolao Bay. It would be a swim with more variety than usual with cliffs and beaches and reefs. I would see no sharks, two turtles, one sting ray and one large jelly fish. I saw a rather underfed looking crown of thorns starfish. He must not have been getting enough coral in his diet and that is encouraging. For the first time on the windward side of the island, I would encounter fishermen casting their nets on the edge of the reef. I would swim below what may have been a college class holding an open-air meeting at the top of a 40 foot cliff overlooking the bay. It was rather late in the afternoon when I reached the end of a long line of cliffs. A small beach looked inviting, so I crossed the reef completing a 5.1 mile swim in 6 hours and 17 minutes. A steep trail through the jungle led to the village of Dandan and the offer of a ride home with Juan Wabol, the Acting Director of the DPS Fire Division.

I hope to complete my swim around Saipan with two more swims. The first to take me from Laulau Bay to Ladder Beach, the place where I started my swim of the Tinian-Saipan Channel 27 years ago, and the second segment should take me out of the channel and back up the west side to Sugar Dock where I started my adventure on the 4th of July.

To be continued.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

September 08, 2000

Evacuees climb to 204
Tropical storm Saomai continued to pound Saipan yesterday forcing more residents to flee their homes for safer grounds due to strong winds and heavy rains. The number of evacuees occupying six of the eight designated emergency shelters climbed to 204 individuals, including children, according to the Emergency Management Office.

3 contracts arising from Outer Cove lease questioned
The Senate Committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs aimed its sight yesterday into the Outer Cove Marina lease following findings of several other contracts that have sprung outside the main agreement. During the resumption of the oversight hearing, committee members raised concern such contracts may have violated the terms of the lease agreement that was approved by the 9th Legislature. The deal gave a 15-year lease to Marine Revitalization Corp. to build and operate the marina and was forged with the Department of Lands and Natural Resources and the U.S. National Parks Service during the previous administration.

Bank assets soar 6% in 2nd quarter
A clear indication of the Commonwealth's resilient financial infrastructure, banks assets soared six percent to $632 million in the second quarter of the year from the first three month's $596 million, a report obtained from the commerce department revealed. The significant growth of overall bank assets was spurred primarily by the increase in the volume of deposits mainly from private sector clients, despite slowdown in lending activities during the same period.

September 08, 2002

House mulls CHC privatization
The Department of Public Health-as well as the Commonwealth Health Center-is facing privatization plans from local lawmakers. This, after contributing the biggest slice to the Babauta Administration's projected $18 million budget deficit this financial year. Privatization of the local hospital and the department that runs it would lessen the fiscal burden now carried by the CNMI government, said Rep. Benjamin Seman.

In fashion, does name matter?
While strolling the aisles of a department store recently, a really cool shirt caught my eye. I had to try it on; it fits like a glove: It was ridiculously cheap, and surprisingly enough, it was made by an unknown brand. The next day, when I first wore my new shirt, several friends asked me where I had purchased it and for how much. All this to say that no-name clothing can also look great and will only cost you a fraction of the price. The key is finding those pieces that look good.

Parenting workshops draw huge crowd
Becoming a parent doesn't start and end with bringing a child to life. Parenting is all about guiding children to ways that will help them grow as better persons. This prompted the holding of parenting workshops at different function rooms of the Diamond Hotel Saturday. "We believe that all parents love their kids. They want to give all to them," said Reina C. Camacho, parenting program coordinator at the Northern Marianas College.

September 08, 2003

Rota special poll to coincide with Nov. 1 midterm election
The special election for Rota to find the replacement for former senator Ricardo S. Atalig will take place on November 1, coinciding with the midterm election. This was confirmed Friday by Gov. Juan N. Babauta, who said this move will save the government additional expenditures that would have been spent if the special poll is done on another date.

Firm checks govt standing on $40M bond
A Honolulu-based bonding company has expressed concern over the CNMI government's financial capability in connection with its $40 million land compensation bond application. In a recent letter to the Commonwealth Development Authority, the bond rating company inquired whether the government can still commit to the bond considering its huge liability with the NMI Retirement Fund.

3 sailors who died at Pearl Harbor in 1941 are identified

By TIM FOUGHT
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP)—Two-thirds of a century ago, Kathleen Wyman drove her brother to California to join the Navy. From there, he shipped out to the USS *Oklahoma* at Pearl Harbor.

He never came home.

Ensign Eldon Wyman was 24 when he died in the Japanese attack of Dec. 7, 1941. Along with hundreds of others, he was buried in mass graves, officially listed as unknowns.

But Thursday, the Pentagon announced that the remains of Eldon Wyman and two other sailors had been identified, and their remains would be returned to their families.

"I'm very grateful that there's been such persistence in following up on this," Kathleen Wyman said in an interview.

She's known about the identification for a few weeks, and she's known about the possibility of an identification for about four years. She plans to put her brother's ashes in a niche next to their father and mother.

The attack on the Oklahoma left 429 sailors and Marines dead. Following the attack, 36 of these servicemen were identified and the remaining 393 were buried as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The focus on Pearl Harbor remains has intensified in recent years through the research of one of the few survivors from the Oklahoma, Ray Emory.

As a result of Emory's work, Kathleen Wyman gave a blood sample for a DNA analysis, used by forensic anthropologists at a special military command along with other means, such as dental records, to identify the remains of her younger brother.

AP

The remains of Lawrence A. Boxrucker, who died in the attacks at Pearl Harbor, were laid to rest on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008 at Dorchester Memorial Cemetary in Dorchester, Wisc.

The Pentagon identified the other sailors as Ensign Irvin A.R. Thompson of Hudson County, New Jersey, and Fireman 2nd Class Lawrence Boxrucker of Dorchester, Wisconsin. Boxrucker will be buried Saturday.

"I am thrilled to death. It is just kind of a relief to know he is home," said 82-year-old Agnes Boxrucker, who was married to one of the sailor's late cousins. "When the veterans service officer called me, I just went ecstatic. Wow."

Audit aims at Cook Islands corruption

$49,000 paid to agency chief

RAROTONGA, Cook Islands (Cook Islands News)—Alleged corrupt activity within the ministry of works has come under heavy fire from the audit office in its new report.

The highly critical report relates to payments made by works to two unregistered companies owned by senior managers.

One of the recommendations of this report is for the Public Service Commissioner to consider its findings and whether there are grounds for the sacking of works secretary Atatoa Herman. Audit's view is that Herman failed in his responsibilities.

Over a four-year period from 2003, works made payments totaling about NZ$72,000 [US$49,000] to two unregistered companies, TNN Supplies and Sirus Enterprises, owned by its works coordinator Tearii Tipokoroa.

Tipokoroa never declared any of this extra income and the true extent of who benefited financially from this activity will never be known, according to the report, as Tipokoroa passed away last December.

Audit, however, interviewed Herman along with other key management of works.

Audit concluded that Herman knew about the Tipokoroa's conflict of interest and ignored government's policy of tendering or obtaining quotes for goods and services.

Herman admitted to audit investigators that he had known since 2003 that there was a conflict of interest but continued the arrangement because he believed it was saving the ministry money. The companies supplied sand, equipment and labour to works. Audit found that there were poor internal controls to check the materials against the invoices and payments, leaving the process wide open to abuse.

In this case, because Tipokoroa was responsible for finding out how much materials and services were needed as well as supplying them, audit viewed this as a fraudulent practice.

Audit also questioned just how involved Herman was in Tipokoroa's two companies after he admitted to using both of them to invoice the Ports Authority for consultancy work. On top of this, audit says it was apparent that Herman had billed the Ports Authority under Sirus Enterprises because he intended to avoid paying tax and to avoid any unwanted interest in his consultancy work. At one point the audit report quotes him as saying that Tipokoroa told him to use the company name so no one would find out he was making extra income.

Herman apparently decided not to tell the PSC that he was carrying out his own private work as a consultant. The report says audit found that Herman breached his employment contract by ignoring this obligation.

Director of water works Ben Parakoti's employment by S&T Contractors has also brought into question how legitimate contracts between the company and works are, given the conflict of interest this presented.

Former road supervisor William Heather Jnr also admitted during the course of the investigation to invoicing works for cleaning of water intakes to the tune of $1700. He told then this was work carried out after hours.

Herman, Heather and works policy advisor Keu Mataroa were alleged to have borrowed or loaned money from Tipokoroa. Herman and Mataroa admitted to audit they had borrowed money but claimed they always paid it back. Audit found this unusual and said the obvious assumption would be that money Tipokoroa loaned came from the profits of TNN and Sirus.

Now the audit office is recommending immediate action to restructure works and put controls in place to avoid any future abuses by management.

UCSC professor gets grant to help preserve Chamorro

By SCOTT RAPPAPORT
srapp@ucsc.edu
UC SANTA CRUZ

University of California Santa Cruz professor of linguistics Sandra Chung has been awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation for a collaborative project to help preserve the endangered Chamorro language.

Chung

Chamorro is an Austronesian language spoken by 45,000 people in the unincorporated U.S. territory of Guam and in the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Chung and Dr. Elizabeth D. Rechebei, a retired Chamorro educator, will work with the Chamorro community in the Mariana Islands to significantly upgrade the documentation of the language.

"Chamorro is now at a critical moment in its history, when improved documentation could make a real difference to its survival as a living language, " Chung noted.

"I'll write a new grammar of the language, and Dr. Rechebei will supervise a working group that will revise the Chamorro-English Dictionary; she will also supervise the videotaping of the life histories of Chamorro elders," Chung added.

Total funds awarded for the three-year collaborative project are $300,000, of which $15,000 will go to UC Santa Cruz.

Chung, who has done linguistic research on Chamorro since 1976, will write a new comprehensive reference grammar of Chamorro intended for linguists, Chamorro speakers, and language learners.

The grammar, revised dictionary, and oral histories--in video and print formats--will provide a highly detailed, accessible record of the Chamorro language for future generations.

The completed project will also serve as a valuable reference for the development of the next generation of Chamorro bilingual education materials—contributing to the teaching and learning of the language—which Chung said could make a critical difference to its survival.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING
Second Floor Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone no. (670) 236-0956/0957 Facsimile no. (670) 236-0995

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NOTICE OF HEARINGS PENDING DENIAL APPEALS

FOR SEPTEMBER 11, 12, 18, & 19, 2008

Notice is hereby given to the persons listed below to appear at the Hearing Office, Department of Labor, Second Floor, Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, on the date and at the time listed below. Please bring any documentation necessary to resolve the issues that led to the denial of your permit application. If you fail to appear or fail to bring required documentation, the appeal may be dismissed and an administrative order may be entered against you. Any employee who intends to request permission to transfer to a new employer must appear at the hearing to make that request; failure to appear may result in immediate denial of transfer relief.

Case No.	Employee	Employer	Hearing Date	Time
DC 08-737	Xu, Su	A L L Corporation	September 19, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-707	Corpus, Mario Ferdinand N.	ABBA Corporation	September 12, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-719	Dacquias, William W.	Aguon, Clyde N.	September 18, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-729	Wang, Wenlong	American Sunny Corporation	September 18, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-730	Yu, Haixia	American Sunny Corporation	September 18, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-579	Asuelo, Marlene Q.	Asiatico, Danilo E.	September 11, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-580	Feria, Lorito D.	Asiatico, Danilo E.	September 11, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-511	Cisnero, Lorna M.	Baltazar, Luisito	September 11, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-725	Gamboa, Editha B.	Basa, Esther I.	September 18, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-721	Hernandez, Mary Jane G.	Benavente, Katherine S.	September 18, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-736	Zhang, Cuifeng	Cheng Xiang Corporation	September 19, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-419	Pomarijos, Albert V.	Clyburn, Donald W.	September 11, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-585	Traspice, Lerma B.	Demapan, Ignacia T.	September 11, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-366	Cao, Chao Yong	Diana & Daisy Corporation	September 11, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-746	Fernandez, Fernando P.	Ebilane Corporation	September 19, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-709	Tabdasan, Analyn T.	Future Dev. Corporation	September 12, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-740	Yu, Xiaomei	Geng Biao Corporation	September 19, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-714	Chen, Dongshun	Great Sunshine Corporation	September 12, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-715	Guo, Jinling	Great Sunshine Corporation	September 12, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-590	Hu, Xingfen	Great Wall Corporation	September 11, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-743	Li, Ying	Great Wall Corporation	September 11, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-739	Han, Meiyu	Hall, Michael E.	September 19, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-722	Liu, Ziyi	Hui Mao Yu Lickisap	September 18, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-718	Chung, Yeon Woo	Hwa Sung Construction Co., Inc.	September 18, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-577	Marquez, Melecia P.	JOS Corporation	September 11, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-578	Laoeng, Camilo D.	JOS Corporation	September 11, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-741	Le, Ping	Kangshun Corporation	September 19, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-733	Wu, Chuihong	Limes, Thomas	September 18, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-747	Cornejo, Nenita D.	Manalo, Mirian M.	September 19, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-705	Tenebro, Loreto E.	Northern Marianas Fisheries	September 11, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-859	Roxas, Gervacio	Northern Marianas Fisheries	September 11, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-860	Adralis, Roland P.	Northern Marianas Fisheries	September 11, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-881	Ocnas, Jonathan R.	Northern Marianas Fisheries	September 11, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-882	Tajores, Adelino G.	Northern Marianas Fisheries	September 11, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-883	Gubalani, Edito M.	Northern Marianas Fisheries	September 11, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-703	Zhang, Wei	Oh Yeah Fashion, Inc.	September 11, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-711	Bayot, Rosalinda C.	Oshiro, Leslie K.	September 12, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-710	Jiang, Wenping	Pacific Horizon, Ltd.	September 12, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-716	Qin, Fengjun	Pacific Horizon, Ltd.	September 12, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-717	Chen, Xuexia	Pacific Horizon, Ltd.	September 12, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-706	Sammacheep, Penphun	Park, Jun Ho	September 11, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-726	Piao, Jizhu	Piao, Ying Ji	September 18, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-745	Garces, Reimell Anne G.	Puyat, Joel H.	September 19, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-735	Santos, Girlie E.	Quitugua, Jane R.	September 19, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-708	Yabut, Marlyn R.	Rabauliman, Bernadita R.	September 12, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-720	Baysa, Benietirso C.	RDA Enterprises Inc.	September 18, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-732	Wu, Tingfa Fa	Rong Hua Co., Ltd.	September 18, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-744	Jin, Yuhua	Roy Corporation	September 19, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-748	Santos, Norman C.	Saint Trading Co. Inc.	September 19, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-113	De La Torre, Romeo H.	Saipan Education Center Inc.	September 11, 2008	9:00 a.m.
DC 08-752	Cui, Yinhua	Se Hoon Corporation	September 12, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-753	Sun, Jingzhu	Se Hoon Corporation	September 12, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-763	Yang, Zhengju	Se Hoon Corporation	September 12, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-764	Bian, Chungping	Se Hoon Corporation	September 12, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-765	Lu, Chao	Se Hoon Corporation	September 12, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-731	Besid, Donato E.	Sea Lovers Marianas, Inc.	September 18, 2008	2:00 p.m.
DC 08-712	Huang, Yuji	Sin Hwa Corporation	September 12, 2008	11:00 a.m.
DC 08-412	Feria, Dicky B.	Taimanao, Nemia F.	September 11, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-727	Berdan, Ruben C.	Tenorio, Manuel A.	September 18, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-728	Fullente, Roberto P.	Tenorio, Manuel A.	September 18, 2008	1:00 p.m.
DC 08-792	Zhen, Guozhang	Yantze Corporation	September 12, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-793	Li, Kaiming	Yantze Corporation	September 12, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-794	Deng, Jin Yan	Yantze Corporation	September 12, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-795	Che, Yushan	Yantze Corporation	September 12, 2008	3:00 p.m.
DC 08-738	Zhou, Xinhua	Yong Fu Corporation	September 19, 2008	10:00 a.m.
DC 08-713	Chen, Chunfei	Z.Y. Li Corporation	September 12, 2008	10:00 a.m.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Pass the budget now!

A lot of things have been said about the high degree of importance we place on education but today's start of classes in public schools comes against the backdrop of a budget crisis that hobbles the local education system right at the starting gate. Since 1998, the Commonwealth government has only passed two budgets: in 2003 and in 2006. This year, the government is once again operating on "continuing resolution" and has only 22 days left before a new fiscal year begins on Oct. 1.

What does this mean for our public schools and the Commonwealth's students? This means that classes will begin today with no budget in place and the Public School System in the dark whether it will have enough funds to last the entire school year. Remember that the budget passed from two years ago did not allot any money for PSS utilities and all government agencies, including all public schools , were still paying a flat rate for water, power and sewer. Fast-forward to today, when PSS must now pay for its own utilities and power is now metered in all public schools and you have a situation ripe for deficit spending and no way of knowing whether the budget that PSS will eventually get will be enough to pay for all its needs. PSS is literally in the dark on how much money it will have and at what rate it should be spending to ensure that it makes it through the year. Even now, PSS is already spending money on portable generators to pump water into school toilets, just so classes could continue despite the power outages. This is another expense that was never planned for nor anticipated.

This situation not only applies to PSS but to all other government-run agencies but this continued lack of a budget is particularly troubling for public schools because it has significant impact on the learning capacity of our students, the future leaders of the Commonwealth.

It is hard to plan when you don't have a budget and having one and sticking to it is a basic principle that underlies all responsible financial undertaking. It is therefore necessary for the Legislature and the Executive branches to get their act together and pass a workable budget and it must do so before the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30.

Yes, the current economic crisis is making it hard to come up with hard figures on next year's projected revenue; the numbers change from day to day, making it difficult to pin down an exact figure that we could work on. For this quarter alone, the government can't collect the revenue raised until the end of October but the Legislature and the Department of Finance will just have to give their best stab at it, obtain the best estimates and get it over with and move on to other issues.

It is so important for a government to have a budget; not having one is tantamount to playing financial roulette. One can argue how important it is to have a budget but not having a budget is a recipe for financial disaster. This is especially true to the CNMI which, if a budget is not passed for FY 2009, will revert to FY 2007 budgetary numbers, which are outdated and do not reflect the fiscal reality of today's economic conditions.

Any more financial punches to this economy are doubly devastating, especially when this particular fiscal matter does not have to be. Both the Executive and the Legislative branches of our government bear this responsibility. Last week we editorialized on the need for everyone in the CNMI to come together in a spirit of Animo and work together. This week we ask you to practice the responsibility that has been entrusted to you as our elected officials. We urge that the CNMI government pass a budget for FY 2009 and to not repeat the fiscal budget failures of yesteryear.

An open letter to our youth

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

You have heard it many times that you the youth hold the future of our country in your hands. You are expected to correct the mistakes your elders have made. Daily you see and hear about the problems that besiege us. Our leaders, in whom we have put our faith, do not seem to have solutions to them. You are the only ones left to do that. Stroll with me as we discuss how you with your youth and youthful insights can transform our nation into a proud and prosperous nation again.

We adults are handing down to you a bleak future. It comes heavily laden with an almost $300 million debt; a disgraceful utility system fostered by over 25 years of neglect; a confrontational posture by our governor against the United States; the daily flight of fellow citizens who have lost faith in our country; several selfish people acting like vultures scavenging over corpses; a deepening pessimistic outlook on prosperity for the future; lost opportunities to improve because we somehow do not know how to create them; and many of our fellow citizens burying their heads in the sand trying to avoid inevitable change. We adults bestow these and more problems on you as your heritage. In simple language, we really have messed up your future.

What are you going to do about them? Are you going to lie down and ignore them and whine that they are not of your making so why worry about them? Or will you vigorously pursue a government job because that's where the money and soft living is? Or will you flee to Guam or to another "utopian" place? Or will you get in line for food stamps like others? **OR STAND UP AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT**?

There are many things you can do. The first thing is to seek a solid education so that you will be able to think and work with confidence. Our islands need many different professions and trades skills to be filled. You must become the backbone of the labor force. You must fill the needs of the community first.

There are many things you can do. The first thing is to seek a solid education so that you will be able to think and work with confidence. Our islands need many different professions and trades skills to be filled. You must become the backbone of the labor force. You must fill the needs of the community first.

Find a profession or trade skill you enjoy and master it. At this point don't think about what wages you will be earning. Once you master a profession or a trade, you will be compensated fairly. The free market will take care of that. But you must become qualified. The ladder to success is one step at a time.

After mastering a profession or trade, come back and practice it here. This is your home. You must become one of the pillars in our community. Moving away may bring you some temporary satisfaction. But consider how much more needed you are here. How many local students are in medical school studying medicine or nursing now? How many local students are in school now studying business majors? Where are all the professions and trades? It is obvious we need you to lead us.

There are many professions and trades we require to rebuild our community. Do you wish to be a small fish in a large bowl or a large fish in a small bowl? Our islands offer you great opportunities for self-fulfillment and service to your fellow citizens. Without you the CNMI will fall more and more under foreign domination.

After your studies, seek any job to get your foot in the labor pool. When you are working you will have a stronger chance to advancing your career. You will make many contacts. As a result you will see opportunities you hadn't noticed before. As you progress in your work, better job offers will come your way. Accept the fact that you

See AN OPEN on Page 13

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Teach them well

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

Almost 60 years ago, Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote the lyrics to the song "You've Got To Be Carefully Taught," from South Pacific, and they almost made it to the monkey house with the social issues in the lyrics, for in the anti-Red fever of the time, they were suspected of being communists!

You've got to be taught to hate and fear,
You've got to be taught from year to year,
It's got to be drummed in your dear little ear
You've got to be carefully taught.
You've got to be taught to be afraid
Of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a diff'rent shade,
You've got to be carefully taught.
You've got to be taught before it's too late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate,
You've got to be carefully taught!
You've got to be carefully taught.

As children are taught to love, so are they taught to hate. With Obama's alleged push for consensus politics, I expected the DNC to have less beat on accentuating differences and more focused on where candidates stood. Media frenzy would not let that be, and VP candidate Joe Biden was immediately dubbed as Obama's attack dog, and regrettably, the Senator seem to have fallen into a stereotype role. McCain's maverick image held the promise that he might be more conciliatory on differences, and more assertive of his track record of bipartisanship, but with the ascension of the Alaskan "bull with lipstick" (Sarah does know how to read a teleprompter well!) and with Karl Rove's camp ascending to a more prominent role in the GOP campaign, we've already seen TV ads getting vicious. As we write, the Democrats are prodding Obama to be more ferocious.

Today begins the Public School System's academic year 2008-09, and nowhere in the history of the United States has there been an institution that has more influence in molding the mindset of its young than that of the public schools.

I have four parameters in my teaching by which I hold myself accountable, and assess the performance of others. The same parameters apply to my living a life and thereby, they are pertinent to getting a life education. They are: a) Time and how it is managed, b) Space and how it is organized, c) Roles and how they are defined, d) Story and how it is articulated. In these pages last week, I wrote a series of five articles that was basically about telling the global human story.

Now, I wish to deal with the parameter on time, since one of the first things we teachers will do today is to present our daily, weekly and the year's schedule. But let us, for now, reflect on the word 'Now.'

At the old Fort Mason compound near the wharf in San Francisco is an office in one of the refurbished warehouse rooms called the Long Now Foundation. It is promoting a Millennium clock, and they do not mean just a thousand years; they propose to train the human mind to think in terms of 10,000 years, and if 2000 BCE be the apogee, then one would sail the previous oceans of time from 8,000 CE to the present, and navigate with one look into the horizon to 12,000 BCE. Today's year designation would be 02008, to indicate that we are dealing with five figures rather than the currently used four. The Foundation is trying to locate a mountain peak where they intend to build a clock to be seen from a distance that will be precise to the second for 20,000 years! Their 'now,' indeed, is very long!

"Now" in common usage, at best, means today, yesterday and tomorrow. At a day apiece, that would be the length of three days. I show in my class this picture of the stick person at the confluence of the infinity symbol (horizontal eight), and say to students that the length of time one can see to where one had come from is the same distance where one can see where one is going. One of my Asian heroes is oft quoted: "S/he who cannot see where s/he came from, would not know where s/he is going."

A few Jewish writers have alluded to the strength and resiliency of the race as coming from the story that they may be in diaspora but theirs is a journey of a 'thousand years,' a motif established by the elderly wandering nomad Abrams from Ur of Chaldea (that would be between the Tigris and the Euphrates for the geography-challenged) who moved to the Levant, and held a people together with a cosmic covenant for a Promise land. So now, when the faithful intone annually, "Next year in Jerusalem," there is not a sense of failure with the vow should the event not happen within 365 days. Theirs is a journey of a thousand years.

"Nowadays" is another timeframe, popularly used though less precise in length and duration. Common usage seem to indicate the distance between generations, which used to be a score as mirrored by our designation of twenty as the unofficial magic number into full adulthood. With the rapid maturity of the young, it has since shrunk to a decade, so "nowadays" often refers to the fashion and mode of the decade.

Olympiad athletes remember the song popularized during the Los Angeles Olympics titled "One Moment in Time." It began as the phrase of that one moment in time when the athlete receives an award on a podium. But I also heard someone elucidate later on a four-year cycle when an Olympian trains for an Olympiad, gets a medal, and reign four-years afterward until the establish record gets bested by new efforts.

Theologians have used the term "here and now," attributed to Paul of Tarsus in the Christina New Testament, to designate a lifetime so that one's covenant with life in the here and now means being responsible and accountable for one's own lifetime.

Already, one can sense the pedagogical contradiction for today's teachers. For if our radio and television practices are any indication, our young are trained to 15 minutes of commercials per one hour of radio broadcast, and 20 minutes per one hour on TV. That means that we are dealing with minds with, at best, an attention span of 4 minutes before it requires the discontinuity of a commercial. "'I want it, and I want it now," a dear friend from Shanghai used to say, acting out the ethos of her generation around the world.

So every classroom in the public school system of the Commonwealth, in some fashion or another, have to deal with the management of time. The teacher takes the lead in demonstrating what timeframe and what timeline will abide. What students sense is the teacher's management of time pretty much will set the class cadence and the homeroom rhythm the rest of year.

HQTs and HETs, let's go teach!

Letters to the Editor

First test for all congressional delegate candidates

What is now the second most important position in our government is being sought after by nine people and it's ridiculous. Our representative to Congress will not have much local governing power but he will be only second to the governor when it comes to our welfare as a Commonwealth. I'm tired of seeing advertisements that only ask for votes but there is no real information for making a decision. The common sense people know some of these people wouldn't be running if it was the same old Washington Representative position. It is now time for the people to find out who is the real deal and who is just looking for a big payday and fame which is why someone must put the candidates to the test—something I do all the time.

I want the candidates for Congress to know that putting up signs, depending on family and playing "safe" politics in not going to cut it for this election. Only two candidates have demonstrated political will and put themselves on line to take a political stance for the people. Only two candidates are exhibiting "public leadership" and the election is right around the corner. Only two candidates have dared to take on the governor to help the people and only one candidate has publicly looked into our power problems. I could go on but I think the other seven candidates should have gotten the message by now.

This is not a popularity contest and the people surely are not going to buy anymore "Pie in the Sky" slogans and promises either, especially when there is no proof in your details. Our governor has ruined that angle when he promised Better Times and didn't deliver. The governor even told us Karl Rove was his personal friend when he was running for office but Karl Rove didn't do anything to help the CNMI when he was the President's right hand man. Now he releases pictures of him and the VP pick Sarah Palin like its going to do him and us some good. Gentlemen this kind of politics will not be tolerated for this vital position in our government if I can help it. We (the people) will not be bamboozled again like I have seen in past elections which is why I have chosen to publicly challenge all of you and there is no choice but to respond if you want to be elected. The day of the numbers game, family politics and safe politics for being elected is over!

No disrespect intended but someone must challenge all the delegates to Congress to simply "explain yourselves" to the all the people if you want to work for us-its commonsense. We all know that there will never be a forum where the entire public will get a true assessment of the nine candidates' intentions and ability if elected. I only have one commonsense question for you to answer in a letter to the editor.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO AND HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GET IT DONE IF ELECTED?

The people need accountability and the BEST representation possible with the capacity to get things done and nothing less.

We don't need to know why you want the job that's your personal message. We don't need to know about your qualifications because it won't define your results. We don't need to know what you have done because that part of the next test you will be asked—so get ready. Candidates must stand on and be elected based on your platform and your ability to deliver this time around because it's a new day for politics in the CNMI. We can't afford to cast "uneducated votes" anymore because that is what got us in this situation today. The people must choose well and every candidate has a political obligation to respond to this simple public request that I'm confident is supported by enough voters to influence the outcome of the election when this is over.

I have already discussed this with the editors of both newspapers and they have agreed to print your letters as long as they are addressing this question. Any attempts to vet your opponents will be deleted from your letter by the editor. To make it equal and fair, the editors and I have agreed that everyone must use the title "Delegate to Congress and last name" (no clan names) and limit your letter to 1,000 words. Your seat in Congress is on the line "for true" and you can believe the people are watching and waiting to see if you can really handle this simple test. If you can't handle the question by responding then we will certainly know you can't handle Washington which is a "good thing" for the people to know when they vote. The ball is now in your court gentlemen and I'm sure the voting public will be watching and waiting on YOU to pass or fail. The response deadline is Sept. 19 for both papers. This is the first of three questions and thanks for your cooperation. One people, one direction for the best candidate to Congress

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman

Grieving the loss of Daidai

A word of condolences and thanks I am writing to extend my humble condolences to the Joeten Tenorio family who are grieving the loss of Soledad Daidai Takai Tenorio, the beloved matriarch of the Joeten family and wife of the late Jose Joeten Camacho Tenorio, founder of Joeten Enterprises. As a student studying at San Diego State University, I was unable to pay my respects in person at her funeral. Nevertheless, I send my prayers and respects to the Joeten family. As a 2006 Joeten Scholarship recipient, I am a beneficiary from the legacy that she has helped build that is Joeten Enterprises. Therefore, I want to thank Joeten Enterprises and family for they have truly made an impact on my life and my educational career.

Jonathan S. Aguon
San Diego, CA

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°	▲86° ▼77°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲85	▼76
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲88	▼74
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲89	▼75
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼77

Around The Globe

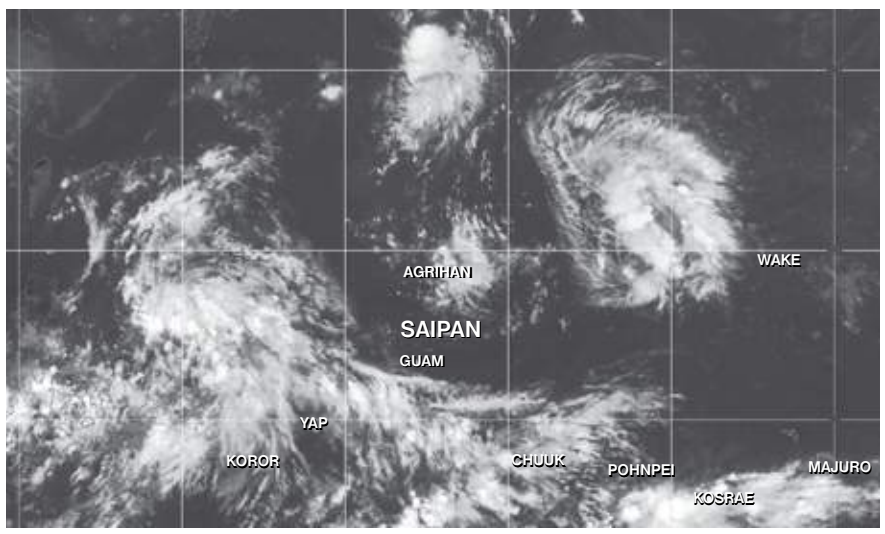
Auckland	Showers	▲64	▼51
Beijing	Cloudy	▲79	▼64
Hong Kong	Showers	▲88	▼79
Honolulu	Showers	▲85	▼76
London	Partly Sunny	▲68	▼54
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲82	▼64
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲58	▼44
Miami	Thunderstorms	▲89	▼81
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲82	▼69
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼66
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲69	▼57
Pusan	Cloudy	▲82	▼62
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼59
Salem	Sunny	▲85	▼49
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲70	▼56
Seoul	Cloudy	▲89	▼60
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲77	▼67
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼71

Tides

Saipan Harbor

7:50AM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
3:57PM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
8:16PM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:30PM, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough runs northward along 130E from 12N to beyond 25N. Low-level convergence near the trough and upper-level divergence are producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within an area bounded by a line running from 24N130E to 8N130E to 13N140E back to 24N130E. This area is located north of Koror and Yap and east of the Marianas. A surface trough reaches northward from EQ139E to 10N143E. Winds converging near and east of the trough are causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 250 miles of a line from EQ143E to 10N145E. This area lies south of Guam. A mid to upper-level low is centered at 20N148E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found within about 100 miles of the center. This low is near the northernmost Mariana Islands. A surface circulation is currently centered near 19N156E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the circulation are occurring north of a line from 17N155E to 17N163E. This area is situated between Minami Tori Shima and Wake Island. Trade-wind convergence is coupling with upper-level divergence to produce scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over Chuuk within 125 miles of a line from 7n150e to 8n155e and also over Kosrae and Majuro within 110 miles of a line from 3N158E to 6N171E To 6N180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:05AM	6:24 PM
Tuesday	6:05AM	6:23 PM
Wednesday	6:05AM	6:23 PM
Thursday	6:05AM	6:22 PM
Friday	6:05AM	6:21 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:03PM	
Tuesday	1:53PM	12:20AM
Wednesday	2:41PM	1:13AM
Thursday	3:27PM	2:06AM
Friday	4:09PM	3:00AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:30am	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily
NW 075	4:55pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:20pm	6:55pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,5

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:50pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	4,7

Manila-Guam

CO 892	11:45am	8:25pm+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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Letters to the Editor

Let's focus on opportunities, benefits of monument

In his 10 letters to the editor and more than 10,000 words he has had published over the past five months, Mr. John Gourley has consistently mischaracterized the statements and role of the Pew Environment Group regarding the proposed marine national monument in the waters around the CNMI's northernmost islands. We understand that he has a different point of view but, regrettably, Mr. Gourley's approach has been to attack the messenger.

The Pew Environment Group has been very clear from the beginning that we support this proposed marine monument not only because the Mariana Trench is home to a diverse array of ocean wildlife and distinct habitats of global significance, but also because CNMI residents will directly benefit from and participate in its creation, management and enforcement.

In the last week alone, more than 180 stories have appeared in U.S. and international press outlets talking favorably about the Mariana Islands. That is exactly the kind of favorable global press that a monument declaration would create. In fact, a recent economic analysis of the proposed marine monument by University of Guam economics professor Dr. Tom Iverson estimated that creating a no-take marine reserve in the waters surrounding the northernmost islands would produce up to 400 new jobs. Moreover, according to his analysis, the monument would also annually generate $10 million in new spending and $5 million in new tax revenue.

Since March, the Pew Environment Group has sponsored numerous forums to provide information about the monument proposal. Recently, we have had at least three public meetings weekly to educate the public about the issues. We have met with and listened to hundreds of residents who support creating a marine monument around the Mariana Trench.

We continue to believe the majority of the islands' residents will support the monument when they learn the facts. We welcome a healthy discussion of this issue, but the relentless focus by Mr. Gourley on issues having nothing to do with the potential benefit to the CNMI is unhelpful and unproductive.

The process to assess the potential of a monument has just begun. The U.S. government has put a proposal on the table and will now undertake a review of the various sites, which includes time for public input so CNMI political leaders and residents have an opportunity to express their views.

We have a rare opportunity to permanently protect these ocean waters in a way that will benefit the CNMI's unique marine environment, promote tourism, enhance research and education, and boost the local economy now and for generations to come.

Let's focus on the opportunities and benefits such a monument might bring. Let's make that the discussion.

Jay Nelson
Director, Ocean Legacy Program
Pew Environment Group
The Pew Charitable Trusts

Commercial fishing remains irrelevant in the CNMI

The majority of the people who have heard of the proposed Mariana Trench Marine Monument (MTMM) are happy to sign the petition in support of it. Many people and volunteers, who are taking an active interest in the well-being of their island and not sitting and waiting for the CNMI to collapse in on itself, are coming to the MTMM office in Garapan (across from Winchells) to learn more about it and to volunteer and collect signatures in support. The economic, scientific, environmental, and educational benefits are the greatest opportunity to drop into the lap of the CNMI. There are no economic trade-offs. There simply is no economic activity in the waters around the top three northernmost islands, except for the Taiwan fishing boats finning sharks. The idea of commercial fishing in the top three northern islands is an absurd excuse to oppose this great chance.

Let's examine the rationale to maintain commercial fishing in those waters, far, far away. In 2001, a report was prepared for the National Marine Fisheries Service by Scott Miller, entitled: *Economic Assessment of the Domestic Fisheries Development Potential of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.* A reasonable person would have thought that the Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council (Wespac) would have concentrated its efforts in assisting the local small boat pelagic fisheries, as recommended in the report; and that they should have ignored commercial fishing. Commercial fisheries is simply not feasible, as costs are too high, the infrastructure is not there, and fish processing are obstacles competing with tourism. They do not catch enough fish to pay their electric bills.

This is an excerpt from the Executive Summary:

". . .

Development of larger-scale domestic pelagic fisheries in the CNMI does not appear to be likely at this time. The primary constraints on such development are that the available infrastructure is not oriented toward commercial fishing and it is not cost competitive with the Port of Guam. Further, locally based pelagic vessels must compete with imported fish landed in large volumes in Guam. Any locally based transshipment operations would also have to be competitive with Guam operations. Large-scale fish processing development is not seen as a potential for development due to potential conflicts with the tourism sector, environmental concerns, and the fact that such operations are currently struggling in the region.

In light of the limited potential for development of larger-scale pelagic fisheries, it seems prudent that the CNMI government should focus its efforts on promoting the existing small boat pelagic fleet. Vessels operating in the existing pelagic fleet are generally profitable at this time. Increased activity, participation, and harvests in that fishery do not appear to be constrained by regulations, finance, infrastructure, or labor. The primary constraint on the local small boat pelagic fishery is its limited local market, which may have been negatively affected by a decline in the local economy. Significant import competition also limits that market and will likely continue to do so. The existing fishery could also be negatively affected if foreign fishing were allowed in the EEZ adjacent to the CNMI. However, the potential for development of foreign fishing is limited and the potential revenues that might be earned from foreign fishing do not warrant risking the viability of the existing small boat pelagic fishery. Thus, efforts to develop the pelagic fisheries of the CNMI should focus on improvements in the existing small boat pelagic fishery."

The CNMI government ignores the report, listening to their Wespac advisors. They ignore the small boat operators and go for the commercial fishing at the expense of passing up a marine monument they could call their own.

In another report written in November 2002 for Wespac by Eleanor Kleiber, *The Impact of the Regulations Resulting from the Events of September 11th on the Transshipment of Fresh Fish in the American Pacific*.

Page 11 of the report discusses the value of fisheries to the CNMI:

". . .

Northern Marianas

Fishery

Fishing is certainly not one of the major contributors to the economy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Tourism and garment production compete for CNMI's small amount of land while the seas remain largely undisturbed by large commercial fishing ventures.

Most of those who fish in CNMI do so from smaller boats that stay within 20 miles from land. The main take by the commercial, subsistence and recreational fishers is skipjack tuna, which is found relatively near the shore at certain times of the year. However, there are also some larger operations that target bottom fish (WpacFIN).

Despite the local fishers, CNMI must import fish so that the hotels and restaurants may guarantee its supply for tourists (Gourley, 2002). In 2000 CNMI imported almost 411 thousand pounds of fish, mostly from Guam and the FSM. (Central Statistics Division, CNMI, 2001, 153). If a local fisherperson has a good catch, they may not have any customers due to the previous agreements with importers (Gourley, 2002)

There is little incentive for Asian longline fishing vessels to port in Saipan because Guam is closer to the southern fishing grounds, and has better facilities as well as cheaper fuel and re-supply costs. At the moment there simply is not an adequate infrastructure for the transshipment of fresh tuna. (Gourley, 2002)

There have been a few attempts at transshipment in the past. In 1992 R/V SUN longline tried the transshipment business, but according to Gourley there was not enough experience or capital invested in the project, and they were unable to catch enough fish to make it profitable. . . ."

Times change and the garment industry is gone for all practical purposes, but commercial fishing, except for small pelagic boat fisheries, remains what it is in the CNMI: Irrelevant. All the fish are in the south and Guam is a better port. "Fishing is certainly not one of the major contributors to the economy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands." Funny, how Gourley's stance changes with the tides.

Let's look forward to a bright new future for the CNMI with an economic, scientific, educational, and environmental stimulus package in the form of the Mariana Trench Marine Monument that may bring us worldwide positive media attention, tourists, jobs, and economic prosperity.

Ken Kramer
Fina Sisu

AN OPEN

From Page 10

will have to work your way up to the top. Don't let the minimum wage trap discourage you. After you prove yourself, you will be paid fairly. The ladder to success is one step at a time.

To me this is the most important factor to consider: "How do I become a productive citizen to my country?" Remember that a country is only as strong as its educated and trained citizens. The more educated they are, the more the country progresses. This is the foundation to rebuilding our economy. You must recapture and control the economy. It seems that over the years, we adults have given away control of our economy to strangers. Our last stronghold is the Legislature and Administration.

Once you have become educated and working, become involved in the political life of our islands. We are failing to recover because many of our leaders have not taken the initiative or the courage to accept changes that are descending upon us. Too many of them are still steeped in the "good old days" of the '70 and '80's. We are about to become a vital and important partner of the United States and fail to recognize it. You will work closer and better with the United States than some of our leaders. You will embrace the changes because you do not fear them. You do not carry old baggage from the past to weight you down.

All of you have grown up as part of your daily life with television, computers, cell phones, ipods and all the latest technology. Your thinking is advanced and world centered, not island centered. You accept the fact that we are part of a flat world in which within seconds or minutes, we can communicate with other members of the world family regardless of distance. Your thinking is no longer provincial. But, alas, how many adults think about or understand all of this. Yes, many have a smattering of it, but they have not grown up using them as you have been. You truly hold the future in your hands.

What and how would you do something differently to improve the lives and welfare of our citizens? What would make our islands a leading resort destination? What industries should we build besides tourism? What are some of the goals we should strive towards? What type of nation do we wish to become? How do we become invaluable to the United States as a partner or do we remain as a poor relative?

Since we adults have caused so many problems and cannot seem to resolve them, I strongly suggest that you, the youth of the CNMI, begin thinking about forming your own political party. You can select young candidates to run for office in the Legislature and the Administration. Think of it—20 Congressmen/women and nine senators, and a governor and lt. Governor—everybody under 50 years of age!

Why should all candidates be under 50 years of age? The most exciting thing about this idea is that the youthful candidates will not be carrying prejudices because youth sees the potentials of all citizens regardless of race or color. Youthful idealism will reign supreme. In this capacity you can build an ideal community and regain our economy.

The above suggestions are meant to spur your thinking about the possibilities and power you as youth possess. The future of the CNMI truly lies in your hands. It is a monumental challenge. You can decide to make accept it and make a change or decide that it's not worth it. It is your choice. Our nation awaits your answer.

Business

Google reigns as world's most powerful 10-year-old

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. (AP)—When Larry Page and Sergey Brin founded Google Inc. on Sept. 7, 1998, they had little more than their ingenuity, four computers and an investor's $100,000 bet on their belief that an Internet search engine could change the world.

It sounded preposterous 10 years ago, but look now: Google draws upon a gargantuan computer network, nearly 20,000 employees and a $150 billion market value to redefine media, marketing and technology.

Perhaps Google's biggest test in the next decade will be finding a way to pursue its seemingly boundless ambitions without triggering a backlash that derails the company.

"You can't do some of the things that they are trying to do without eventually facing some challenges from the government and your rivals," said Danny Sullivan, who has followed Google since its inception and is now editor-in-chief of SearchEngineLand.

Google's expanding control over the flow of Internet traffic and advertising already is raising monopoly concerns.

The intensifying regulatory and political scrutiny on Google's expansion could present more roadblocks in the future. Even now, there's a chance U.S. antitrust regulators will challenge Google's plans to sell ads for Yahoo Inc., a fading Internet star whose recent struggles have been magnified by Google's success.

Privacy watchdogs also have sharpened their attacks on Google's retention of potentially sensitive information about the 650 million people who use its search engine and other Internet services like YouTube, Maps and Gmail. If the harping eventually inspires rules that restrict Google's data collection, it could make its search engine less relevant and its ad network less profitable.

To protect its interests, Google has hired lobbyists to bend the ears of lawmakers and ramped up its public relations staff to sway opinion as management gears up to conquer new frontiers.

"Google will keep pushing the envelope," predicted John Battelle, who wrote a book about the company and now runs Federated Media, a conduit for Internet publishers and advertisers. "It's one of the things that seems to make them happy." In the latest example of its relentless expansion, Google has just released a Web browser to make its search engine and other online services even more accessible and appealing. Not every peripheral step has gone smoothly, though; several of the company's ancillary products have flopped or never lived up to the hype.

Extending Google's ubiquity to cell phones and other mobile devices sits at the top of management's agenda for the next decade.

But the lengthy to-do list also includes: making digital copies of all the world's books; establishing electronic file cabinets for people's health records; leading the alternative energy charge away from fossil fuels; selling computer programs to businesses over the Internet; and tweaking its search engine so it can better understand requests stated in plain language, just like a human would. "There are people who think we are plenty full of ourselves right now, but from inside at least, it doesn't look that way," said Craig Silverstein, Google's technology director and the first employee hired by Page and Brin. "I think what keeps us humble is realizing how much further we have to go."

AP

A Google Doodle entry is shown at the Doodle Museum at Google headquarters in Mountain View, Calif., Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2008.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil prices drop as jobs data add to demand worries

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil prices sank to a five-month low Friday as a jump in the U.S. unemployment rate signaled to traders that Americans might keep paring back their energy use to save money. The Labor Department said the economy lost jobs in August for the eighth consecutive month—and at a faster-than-expected pace. The unemployment rate spiked to 6.1 percent from 5.7 percent in July, above the 5.8 percent rate that analysts forecast. "There's been a terrific amount of growing concern about the outlook for demand globally," said John Kilduff, senior vice president of risk management at MF Global LLC. "Today's employment report emboldened that concern." Light, sweet crude for October delivery fell $1.66 to settle at $106.23 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange—its lowest settlement since early April. During the session, it fell as low as $105.13. Since surging to a record $147.27 a barrel on July 11, crude has tumbled by over $40, or more than 27 percent.

Talks fail; machinists strike Boeing Co.

EVERETT, Wash. (AP)—Striking Boeing Co. production workers hunkered down Saturday for what could be along, bruising battle with costly repercussions for both sides.

Greeted by friendly honking from passing vehicles, members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers responded with cheering and blasts from handheld air horns Saturday at plants from Frederickson to Everett as cloudy skies gave way to warm and sunny weather. How long are workers used to receiving some of the top blue-collar wages in the Puget Sound area prepared to go without pay? "As long as it takes," said Scott Robertson, who works in final assembly of 737s in Renton, adding that he has money saved up to last three months. "It's been about lack of respect," said Steve Morrison, 42, a tester in Everett plant. "They always tell us we're valued much but labor is the first out the door, the first to be outsourced."

Silver State Bank in Nevada is shut

WASHINGTON (AP)—Regulators on Friday shut down Silver State Bank, saying the Nevada bank failed because of losses on soured loans, mainly in commercial real estate and land development. It was the 11th failure this year of a federally insured bank. Nevada regulators closed Silver State and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. was appointed receiver of the bank, based in Henderson, Nev. It had $2 billion in assets and $1.7 billion in deposits as of June 30. Andrew K. McCain, a son of Republican presidential nominee John McCain, sat on the boards of Silver State Bank and of its parent, Silver State Bancorp, starting in February but resigned in July citing "personal reasons," corporate filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission show. Andrew McCain also was a member of the bank's audit committee, responsible for oversight of the company's accounting. The younger McCain, who is the chief financial officer of Hensley & Co., the beer distributorship of which Cindy McCain is chairwoman, is the Arizona senator's adopted son from his first marriage.

Unemployment climbs to 5-year high of 6.1 percent

WASHINGTON (AP)—The nation's unemployment rate bolted above the psychologically important 6 percent level last month for the first time in five years - and it's likely to go even higher in the months ahead, possibly throwing the economy into a tailspin as Americans pick a new president.

A blizzard of pink slips propelled the jobless rate from 5.7 percent in July to 6.1 percent in August, the Labor Department reported Friday. Such a sharp increase is usually a strong recession warning, and it dashed investors' hopes for a late-year recovery.

Worried about the economy and their own business prospects, employers cut payrolls by 84,000 in August, marking the eighth straight month of losses.

So far this year, a staggering 605,000 jobs have vanished - slightly less than the population of Alaska. The economy needs to generate more than 100,000 new jobs a month for employment to remain stable.

Richard Yamarone, economist at Argus Research, feared that the jobless rate would cause consumers and businesses to "move from a moderately concerned stage to outright fear" and reduce their spending even more.

A toxic trio of housing, credit and financial problems has badly shaken the economy, and the crisis shows no signs of letting up. It's the public's top worry, and many experts believe the situation will get worse before it gets better.

The unemployment increase means many companies will feel pressure to reduce their business investments - either in capital projects or hiring - for the rest of the year.

"Mix business caution with consumer exhaustion and you have a recipe for a real recession," said Terry Connelly, dean of Golden Gate University's Ageno School of Business.

AP

Robert Wittke, left, 24, who says he has been looking for full or part-time work for about two months, talks with manager Jennifer Kaminsky as he fills out an application at Snelling Staffing Services in East Brunswick, N.J., Friday, Sept. 5, 2008.

As unemployment spikes, companies weigh options

NEW YORK (AP)—U.S. companies have cut more than 550,000 jobs so far in 2008 as they try to preserve their profits in a slumping economy, but analysts say such downsizing must be done carefully for corporations to have any long-term benefits.

A continuum of companies have announced plans to cut their payrolls since the economy began to weaken last year, and many chief executives are still taking a hard look at their overhead to determine who is expendable and who isn't. That means layoffs will remain a possibility across a number of sectors, from financial services to airlines and manufacturing, for quite some time.

But analysts who track the labor market believe job cuts can in some cases position companies for solid growth once a recovery begins.

"If you're going to do it, do it right," said Michael Gibbs, a professor of economics and human resources at the University of Chicago. "You need to be cautious and go slowly because every slowdown ends, and in this case it's important because there's a really good chance by the end of the year, the economy is going to be looking fine again."

The job losses continued in August, according to the Labor Department, which said Friday that 84,000 were cut. The government also said the unemployment rate rose last month to 6.1 percent - the highest level in five years.

Cutting jobs is a quick way to cut costs - including salaries and benefits - but Gibbs pointed out that layoffs by themselves can be expensive since many companies pay for severance and outplacement services. They can also hurt morale and productivity if remaining employees feel the layoffs were handled badly; a company may have cut its payroll costs, but if it has unhappy workers, it may end up limiting its revenue growth as well.

Laying off skilled workers can also leave companies in a bind once the climate does get back to normal - having to hire and retrain new workers can put a business at a competitive disadvantage.

Nation

New England braces for Hanna's drenching rains

AP

Andrea Shutts of Morehead City, N.C., holds her daughter Hannah, 2, up in the air so her hair can blow in the wind of Tropical Storm Hanna at the Oceanna Pier in Atlantic Beach , N.C. on Friday, Sept. 5, 2008.

BOSTON (AP)—Southern New England is bracing for drenching rain and gusts near 50 mph as Tropical Storm Hanna runs up the Eastern Seaboard.

Hanna came ashore Saturday morning in the Carolinas and forecasters at the National Weather Service expect it to hit New England by Sunday morning. They're predicting widespread showers and scattered thunderstorms, accompanied by wind gusts.

States were taking precautions, with Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell putting 200 National Guard soldiers and airmen on standby.

As of 11 p.m. EDT, Hanna had maximum sustained winds near 55 mph and was centered about 90 miles west-southwest of Long Island. The storm, blamed for disastrous flooding and more than 100 deaths in Haiti, was moving near 30 mph.

In Rhode Island, residents were urged to protect their windows and have extra batteries available for flashlights.

Massachusetts officials are worried about flash flooding in urban areas, downed trees and power outages, but aren't expecting huge headaches.

Massachusetts could receive between 2 and 6 inches of rain. But its rivers are not expected to flood because their levels are relatively low and the ground is particularly dry, all of which could help absorb most of the rainfall brought by Hanna, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency spokesman Peter Judge said.

"On the other hand, the power issue is a concern with the strong winds associated with at least the east side of the eye of the storm as it comes through—which essentially will be lower south east Massachusetts, that is the Cape and Islands," which are expected to bear most of the power outages, Judge said.

Hanna brought heavy rains and high winds to New Jersey, but no major weather-related problems were reported.

Forecasters said the massive system contained wind gusts as high as 60 mph, and could drop as much as 6 inches of rain before leaving the region late Saturday. As of 11 p.m., most areas had seen about 2 to 4 inches of rain, with the higher amounts in northern areas, but the precipitation had ended in most areas. There were scattered power outages across the state.

The rain also left many roadways flooded, particularly in northern areas where some motorists became stranded when they tried to drive through high waters. A few drivers had to be rescued from their vehicles, but no major traffic problems were reported.

The brunt of the storm passed through New Jersey during the early evening, and the National Weather Service discontinued tropical storm warnings for most of the state late Saturday night. However, flood warnings and watches remained in effect for many northern areas.

Kentucky works to keep embattled institution open

SOMERSET, Ky. (AP)—Physically, Deron Dickerson was a 38-year-old man. Mentally, he was a toddler who needed constant supervision.

Left alone in a bathtub, Dickerson drowned three years ago in Kentucky's largest institution for mentally disabled adults. In the years since, government investigators have found a pattern of serious problems and abuses at Bluegrass Communities at Oakwood.

One choked to death. Some have been beaten, including a man found with a shoe print on his face. Another needed surgery after swallowing latex gloves. And investigators continue to get about seven reports a month of "major incidents" at Oakwood, which has 220 residents.

Despite the problems, Kentucky political leaders refuse to consider closing Oakwood, one of a dwindling number of large institutions for mentally disabled adults across the U.S.

Oakwood's fate is the latest round in a national debate over how best to house and treat those with mental disabilities.

The trend nationwide is to eliminate large care centers, said Peter Berns, executive director of The Arc of the United States, one of the nation's largest advocacy groups for people with intellectual disabilities.

"There is no need for people to live in institutions," he said. "It's extraordinarily harmful to people."

Instead, the trend has been to move people into apartments, houses or smaller group homes in communities. At least nine states—Alaska, Hawaii, Indiana, Maine, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia—have closed their large centers, according to The Arc.

ACROSS THE NATION

SF Bay area officer, 2 others killed in gun fight

MARTINEZ, Calif. (AP)—Three people including a police officer are dead after a reported domestic disturbance at a hair salon turned into a gun fight, police in this San Francisco Bay area community said Saturday. Martinez police and Contra Costa County sheriff's deputies responded to the disturbance call at Elegant Hair Designs at 11:35 a.m., said Jimmy Lee, a sheriff's spokesman. At the time the salon was full of customers, including a bridal party. No one inside the salon was shot. After officers arrived, the gunman, who said he was looking for his ex-wife, fled to an apartment complex behind the salon, and shots were fired, Lee said. Martinez police Sgt. Paul Starzyk was killed in the exchange, which occurred inside an apartment in the complex. The gunman, who has not been identified, was then fatally shot by officers, said Martinez Police Chief Tom Simonetti.

4th Pa. teen charged in killing of immigrant

POTTSVILLE, Pa. (AP)—Authorities in Pennsylvania say a fourth teenager has been charged in the fatal beating of a Mexican immigrant. Schuylkill County prosecutors charged the teen in juvenile court Friday with aggravated assault, ethnic intimidation and other offenses. His name and age are not being released. Three others are charged as adults in the July attack in the town of Shenandoah on 25-year-old factory worker Luis Ramirez. Homicide charges are filed against 16-year-old Brandon Piekarsky and 17-year-old Colin Walsh. Eighteen-year-old Derrick Donchak faces aggravated assault and other charges. A local school district has agreed to provide Piekarsky and Walsh with 12 hours of in-home education per week while the case against them is pending.

Crash with suspect's SUV kills Philly officer

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—A 16-year-old in a stolen vehicle smashed into a police car during a chase, killing one of two officers in the cruiser, authorities said Saturday. Andre Butler was charged Saturday with third-degree murder and vehicular homicide in the death of Officer Isabel Nazario, 40. Butler also faces aggravated assault charges stemming from injuries to Nazario's partner, Terry Tull, who was driving the cruiser and suffered broken ribs and a broken hip. Tull remained in stable condition Saturday, according to a nursing supervisor at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Butler, who was charged as an adult, initially fled the Friday night crash on foot but was captured a short time later, according to police. He was treated for minor injuries at a hospital. Police said Butler prompted the chase by running a red light in a stolen Cadillac Escalade and not stopping for officers. He did not have a driver's license, police said.

McCain-Palin becoming Palin-McCain?

AMERICA VOTES

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (AP)—The banners, buttons and signs say McCain-Palin, but the crowds say something else.

"Sa-rah! Pa-lin!" came the chant at a Colorado Springs rally on Saturday moments before Republican nominee John McCain took the stage with Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, a woman who was virtually unknown to the nation just a week earlier. The day before, thousands screamed "Sa-rah! Sa-rah! Sa-rah!" at an amphitheater outside Detroit.

"Real change with a real woman," read one sign at a Wisconsin rally. "Hurricane Sarah leaves liberals spinning," cried another.

In the short time since McCain spirited the 44-year-old first-term governor out of Alaska and onto a national stage as his running mate, Palin has become an instant celebrity. And since her speech at the Republican National Convention, watched by more than 40 million Americans, she is emerging as the main attraction for many voters at their campaign appearances.

AP

Republican presidential candidate, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., smiles as his vice presidential running mate, Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, talks about his accomplishments during an airport campaign rally Saturday afternoon, Sept. 6, 2008 in Colorado Springs, Colo.

"She's the draw for a lot of people," said Marilyn Ryman, who came to see her at the Colorado rally inside an airport hangar. "The fact that she's someone new, not the old everything we've seen before."

McCain has sought to portray Palin as a bulldog who will help him "shake things up" on Capitol Hill.

Democrats post big gains in voter registration

CLAIRTON, Pa. (AP)—Five days a week, Linda Graham trolls tattered neighborhoods of this once thriving steel city outside Pittsburgh for unregistered voters she can sign up as Democrats - one of thousands of unknown volunteers whose work outside the limelight has already altered the basic arithmetic of the November election. The epic nomination battle between Barack Obama and Hillary Rodham Clinton helped put millions more Democrats on the voter rolls while Republican registration declined. Now Graham, 45, has taken three months of unpaid leave from her job at Pittsburgh's Central Blood Bank in the hope of adding to those gains before the presidential vote.

She's encouraged by the response here. "They're all feeling the crunch" of lost jobs and a sagging economy, Graham said. "But people are feeling empowered. They're feeling like, you know what, I hold a little bit of power in this."

To counter this effort, the Republicans are counting on a formidable, high-tech get-out-the-vote operation that has helped them win the past two presidential elections.

Since the last federal election in 2006, volunteers like Graham combined with the enthusiasm generated by the Obama-Clinton struggle to add more than 2 million Democrats to voter rolls in the 28 states that register voters according to party affiliation. The Republicans have lost nearly 344,000 thousand voters in the same states.

World

Bhutto widower elected Pakistani president

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Benazir Bhutto's widower swept Pakistan's presidential election on Saturday, offering hope for stability to a nuclear-armed country feeling intense U.S. pressure to crack down on Islamic militants.

In a grim reminder of the problems awaiting Asif Ali Zardari, rescuers in the northwest dug with their hands for survivors after at least 30 people were killed in a massive suicide bombing.

Already head of the main ruling party, Zardari becomes one of the most powerful civilian leaders in Pakistan's turbulent 61-year history. Last month, he marshaled a coalition that forced stalwart U.S. ally Pervez Musharraf to quit as head of state.

However, he begins with limited goodwill among a population who recall his nickname, Mr. Ten Percent, for alleged corruption during Bhutto's two terms in office as prime minister and doubt his political vision and leadership skills.

He is also untested on the international stage, where he must deal with mounting Western concern over how Taliban and al-Qaida militants have nested in the tribal belt along the Afghan border.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said she was looking forward to working with Zardari.

"I've been impressed by some of the things he has said about the challenges that Pakistan faces, about the centrality of fighting terrorism, about the fact that the terrorism fight is Pakistan's fight and also his very strong words of friendship and alliance with the United States," Rice told reporters on a trip to North Africa. Zardari made no mention of those topics as he savored his triumph over Musharraf, during whose reign he sat for years in jail on graft charges that never produced a conviction.

AP

Pakistani President elect Asif Ali Zardari, center, head of the ruling Pakistan People's Party and widower of two-time Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, is congratulated by party members during a celebration dinner at the Prime Minister residence in Islamabad, Pakistan on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008.

Challenges that Pakistan's new president will face

The following are some of the major challenges facing Asif Ali Zardari, the widower of slain ex-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who was elected Pakistan's president by lawmakers Saturday.

■ Militants

The government must respond to Western pressure to clamp down on Taliban and al-Qaida guerrillas attacking targets in Pakistan and Afghanistan without provoking a tribal uprising or alienating a public already skeptical of the Pakistani role in Washington's war on terror.

■ Economic problems

Pakistan needs donors to top up its foreign currency reserves and prevent a run on the rupee. The government has slashed subsidies to fight a widening budget deficit and is under pressure to do more to soften the blow of inflation running at more than 20 percent. Investment and economic growth are slowing.

■ Nuclear proliferation

As president, Zardari will chair the joint military-civilian committee that controls Pakistan's nuclear weapons. He also will likely face calls for the release of Abdul Qadeer Khan, the scientist blamed for passing nuclear technology to Iran, North Korea and Libya, and questions about whether Khan knows more about secret atom bomb projects in other countries.

■ Democracy

The election completes Pakistan's return to civilian rule nine years after Pervez Musharraf's military coup, but the country could be more democratic. Zardari will be under pressure to resign as leader of his political party and return powers that Musharraf took away from Parliament. Doubts remain about the independence of the judiciary purged by Musharraf.

■ India

A peace process with India begun by Musharraf has stalled without solving the core dispute over Kashmir. Recent mass protests in Kashmir have reawakened Pakistani hopes that it might one day gain control of the Himalayan territory over which the countries have twice gone to war. India accuses Pakistani spies of helping bomb its embassy in Kabul.

■ Staying alive

Zardari has already moved into the prime minister's residence because of concern for his safety, and his wife, Bhutto, was assassinated in December. Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilan's limousine was fired on earlier this week. Musharraf survived several assassination attempts, including suicide bombings blamed on al-Qaida.

China, Iran discuss nuclear issue

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese President Hu Jintao urged flexibility and a peaceful resolution of Iran's nuclear ambitions in a meeting with his Iranian counterpart on Saturday, days after Tehran announced it has increased its number of operating centrifuges.

In talks with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who was in Beijing for the opening ceremony of the Paralympic Games, Hu said China respects Iran's right to peaceful energy and is pushing for the problem to be solved through negotiations.

"At present, the Iran nuclear issue is faced with a rare opportunity for the resumption of talks, and we hope all parties concerned could seize the opportunity and show flexibility, to push for a peaceful settlement of the issue," Hu was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua News Agency.

State television showed the two men warmly shaking hands and smiling for the cameras at the Great Hall of the People, where Hu had earlier welcomed world leaders to the Paralympics.

The meeting came a little over a week after Iran's Aug. 29 announcement that it had increased the number of operating centrifuges at its uranium enrichment plant to 4,000.

45-nation group OKs landmark US-India nuke deal

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—The U.S. gained key international backing Saturday for a bitterly contested plan to sell peaceful nuclear technology to India - a South Asia powerhouse that has tested atomic weapons but has refused to sign global nonproliferation accords.

Washington said the landmark deal, which still needs U.S. congressional approval, will place India's nuclear program under closer scrutiny. But detractors warned it could set a dangerous precedent in efforts to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction.

"By establishing a 'good guys' and 'bad guys' set of rules, the decision will make it far harder to curb the South Asian nuclear and missile arms race," said Daryl Kimball, who heads the Washington-based Arms Control Association. Kimball said the deal could undermine efforts to contain the Iranians and North Koreans.

Saturday's approval by the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group dealt "a profound setback to the nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament system that will produce dangerous ripple effects for years to come," he said.

The group, which governs the legal world trade in nuclear components and know-how, signed off on the deal after three days of contentious talks in Vienna and some concessions to countries insistent on holding India to its promises not to touch off a new nuclear arms race.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Flood in China coal mine traps 23 people

BEIJING (AP)—Twenty-three people were trapped in a flooded coal mine in central China, authorities said Sunday. The flood swamped the mine in Yuzhou city of Henan province early Sunday morning, trapping 23 people, the State Administration of Coal Mine Safety said in a statement on its Web site. It did not explain what caused the flood. The official Xinhua News Agency said more than 50 miners were working in the shaft. The report cited local authorities as saying that many of the workers managed to escape, while a rescue operation was under way to save the trapped workers at the Fushun coal mine. Xinhua said the mine is owned by the Hebi Coal Industry (Group) Co. Ltd. based in Hebi, a city in Henan. Phone calls to the mine owner and the Yuzhou city coal mine safety bureau rang unanswered Sunday.

Landslide swallows remote village in southern RP

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A landslide set off by heavy rains buried several huts in a remote gold-mining village in the southern Philippines, leaving at least eight people dead and nine others missing, police said Sunday. About 18 huts at the foothills of Masara village in Maco township were destroyed Saturday by the tons of mud and rocks, injuring 17 villagers and forcing 70 families to seek shelter in a school building for safety, regional police chief Andres Caro said. Another landslide hit the village early Sunday but there was no immediate reports of new casualties or damage, Caro said. Army and police, backed by two air force helicopters and workers from a gold-mining company battled heavy rains and mud to retrieve at least nine villagers who were reported to have been buried Saturday under mud and rocks, Caro told The Associated Press by telephone. Cell phone connections were lost in the disaster in Compostela Valley province, about 520 miles (840 kilometers) southeast of Manila, further hampering rescue efforts, Caro said.

Woman's body found in suitcase in Tokyo hotel

TOKYO (AP)—The dead body of an unidentified woman was found curled up in a suitcase in a Tokyo hotel room, a day after the foul smell of her body prompted the evacuation of dozens of guests, police said Saturday. Police are looking for the owner of the suitcase and the person who booked the room on the 24th floor of the Shinjuku Washington Hotel where the body was found Friday night, a Tokyo police official said on condition of anonymity, citing department policy. The body was that of a trim woman in her 50s or 60s who was dressed in a polo shirt and trousers. Her body was curled in the fetal position inside a plastic bag within the suitcase, the official said. The woman had no visible injuries and the cause of death was not immediately obvious, he said, adding that it wasn't clear how long she had been in the room or how long she had been dead.

World

Category 4 storm Ike blasts Turks and Caicos

PROVIDENCIALES, Turks and Caicos (AP)—Hurricane Ike roared across the Turks and Caicos on Sunday as a ferocious Category 4 storm, as people sought refuge from its howling winds in emergency shelters or in their homes.

Shopkeepers and homeowners in Providenciales frantically boarded up windows and residents headed to makeshift shelters late Saturday as Ike's massive gray wall of clouds neared the low-lying island chain island.

The airport in Providenciales closed after thousands of tourists and residents of the typically tranquil island chain evacuated.

The storm brought fierce, palm-bending winds that Desiree Adams, along with 11 members of her family, could hear through the storm shutters of her Grand Turk home. The power was out, but they had water and food and battery-powered lanterns if necessary.

"We're all just laying down looking up at the dark ceiling and talking," Adams, a personal adviser to the island chain's chief minister for tourism issues, said by mobile phone.

Grand Turk, the capital of the Turks and Caicos, is home to about 3,000 people, and has little natural protection from the sea and expected storm surge, but Adams said she and her family were not afraid.

"We live by faith here," she said. "We believe in Jesus Christ so a lot of praying is going forth. There is going to be damage, no doubt, to infrastructure but that we can replace over time."

The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Ike's eye was passing over the Turks and Caicos early Sunday. The center's Web site showed hurricane force winds from Ike battering the island. It was moving west about 15 mph (24 kph) with winds near 135 mph (215 kph). Its path would take it by the southeastern Bahamas early Sunday and near eastern Cuba Sunday night or early Monday.

Ike appeared then headed for the Gulf of Mexico. In Louisiana, Gov. Bobby Jindal set up a task force to prepare for the possibility of more havoc, while Floridians stocked up on batteries, water and gas cans.

The approach of the hurricane also raised alarm in Haiti, where officials issued a tropical storm warning and feared it could worsen deadly flooding. And Cuba, still recovering from a devastating hit by Category 4 Hurricane Gustav last month, was directly in Ike's projected path.

Cuba's government warned people to be ready to take emergency action, but hotels said they had not yet started evacuating foreign guests.

Guantanamo Bay Navy base in southeast Cuba will go on "condition of readiness one" at 2 a.m. EDT (0600 GMT), meaning all ferries will be secured, beaches will be off limits and private cars will be banned from roads, said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Robert Lamb.

Lamb said the commander will lift the restrictions after the hurricane has passed and a damage assessment is made at the U.S. base, where some 255 men suspected on links to the Taliban and al-Qaida in what the military says are hurricane-proof cells.

AP

People wait in a long line for one of the last planes to get off the Island of Providenciales before Hurricane Ike strikes the area, in the Turks & Caicos Islands, Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008.

Haitians flee Gonaives before Ike reaches island

GONAIVES, Haiti (AP)—Hundreds of people fled this waterlogged city Saturday for higher ground as powerful Hurricane Ike threatened to unleash heavy rain and compound a disaster caused by a previous storm. At the local jail, emaciated inmates waited for food to stave off starvation.

With a tropical storm warning issued Saturday for Gonaives and other parts of Haiti, some residents climbed on top of cars to reach the second floor of their homes, where they had piled up furniture and spread sheets to provide shade, said Holly Inurreta of Catholic Relief Services.

"We are very concerned about Ike," she said. "Any bit more of rain and Gonaives will be cut off again."

Police Commissioner Ernst Dorfeuille told The Associated Press on Saturday that a news report the previous evening that quoted him as saying 495 bodies had been found in Gonaives from Tropical Storm Hanna was completely wrong. He told AP there were 32 confirmed deaths in this city on Haiti's west coast from the storm that hit on Monday.

Ike, a Category 4 hurricane, was expected to skirt northern Haiti late Saturday and Sunday.

Wesley Sijuen, a 28-year-old father of twins and a 3-year-old son, trudged through heavy mud with seven of his relatives to reach a convent at a nearby mountaintop. His brother-in-law, 28-year-old Jean Emmanuel, said numerous Haitians were fleeing Gonaives.

"Everyone is trying to save themselves," Emmanuel said.

One gray-haired woman left on the back of a motorbike, balancing a bucket of silverware, glasses and other kitchen items on her head.

In the city, U.N. peacekeepers and aid workers delivered high-energy biscuits and water to famished residents, many of whom had not eaten since Monday.

"What I saw in this city today is close to hell on earth," U.N. envoy Hedi Annabi said as he toured the region on Saturday.

US holds off on civilian nuclear pact with Russia

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP)—Now is not the right time for the U.S. to move forward on a once-celebrated deal for civilian nuclear cooperation with Russia, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Saturday.

Her comment increased speculation that President Bush is planning to punish Moscow for invading Georgia, a former Soviet republic, by canceling the agreement. Such a move is being planned, according to senior Bush administration officials, but is not yet final.

"The time isn't right for the Russia agreement," Rice told reporters while flying from Tunisia to Algeria during a visit to North Africa. "We'll be making an announcement about that later."

U.S.-Russian relations have cooled considerably since last month's military standoff between Russia and Georgia. On Saturday, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said the war has shown the world that "Russia is a nation to be reckoned with."

Traveling in Italy, Vice President Dick Cheney pushed back against Moscow, saying: "Russia's actions are an affront to civilized standards and are completely unacceptable."

The nuclear deal was signed in May by U.S. and Russian officials and is now before Congress. It would give the U.S. access to modern Russian nuclear technology and clear the way for Russia to establish itself as a lucrative center for the import and storage of spent nuclear fuel from American-supplied reactors around the world.

In Israel, era of mass immigration ends

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP)—Melissa Schwab is no Zionist zealot. She's not an Orthodox Jew seeking to be nearer to God. She didn't flee anti-Semitism.

So why move nearly 9,000 miles from her home in Hawaii and settle in life-on-the-edge Israel? Because, she says, she likes a lifestyle that is "secular and normal" while offering something "a bit more meaningful."

The 26-year-old American student's decision to make "aliyah" - the Hebrew term for "going up" - makes her part of the Jewish state's vast immigration enterprise, the bedrock of its very existence. But the influx that brought together more than 3 million Jews from more than 100 countries following Israel's creation in 1948 has dwindled to a trickle.

The last great immigration wave - Ethiopian Christians of Jewish ancestry who convert back to Judaism for resettlement in Israel - has just ended, and with it an iconic chapter in Israeli history.

The persecuted and the poor of world Jewry are for the most part already here. So most future immigrants will be people like Schwab, making a private, individual choice.

Israel's appeal to the Jewish Diaspora used to be as a small feisty nation fighting for its survival, or as a socialist alternative to the capitalist rat race. There were kibbutzim to farm and deserts to make bloom.

But today the Jewish state is in many ways a normal industrialized democracy. Its immigrants today are as likely to be job-hunting non-Jews from Africa and Asia, many of them here illegally, as Zionists in search of spiritual fulfillment.

WORLD BRIEFS

Spanish minister backtracks on migrant visa plan

MADRID, Spain (AP)—Spain's labor minister has backtracked from a much criticized proposal to drastically slash the number of work visas available to migrant workers. Labor Minister Celestino Corbacho had said it did not make sense to keep recruiting foreign workers when Spain has 2.5 million people unemployed. On Wednesday, Corbacho said the visas "will get close to zero," drawing criticism from unions, immigrant groups and opposition parties. He reversed his position late Friday, saying "I must have said something wrong," adding that he didn't mean to say that he would severely cut back on the number of work visas to migrant workers.

Rock slide in Cairo shantytown kills 24

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—Massive boulders crashed down on a shantytown on the outskirts of Cairo Saturday, killing at least 24 people and burying many more under tons of rubble, Egyptian authorities said. Frantic residents in the sprawling Manshiyet Nasr slum were digging by hand and trying to lift huge rocks to reach any survivors, shouting out the names of relatives and family members trapped below. Haidar Baghdadi, the parliamentarian for the region, told Al-Jazeera television buried residents were calling for help from under the rubble using their cell phones. At least eight boulders, some the size of small houses, peeled away from the towering Muqattam cliffs and buried about 50 homes in the slum, one of many densely populated shantytowns ringing the city of 17 million. Manshiyet Nasr is home to 1.2 million people, according to Baghdadi. A security official said 35 people were injured and many more may be buried under hundreds of tons of rock that fell. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Swazis hold 40th birthday of king, independence

MBABANE, Swaziland (AP)—The Swazi king, bare-chested and wearing a traditional leopard skin loin cloth, celebrated his 40th birthday and his nation's 40th independence day in lavish style Saturday—hosting an extravaganza that contrasted sharply with the biting poverty of his subjects. King Mswati III toured the national stadium in an open-topped BMW to cheers and fluttering flags. Tens of thousands of Swazi maidens who had performed for the king last weekend at the annual Reed Dance were at the festivities, which included traditional dancing and Zulu drumming, as well as a full military parade. Visiting heads of state were whisked into the stadium in a long convoy of luxury cars, purchased specially for the occasion. The loudest cheer was reserved for Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe, who climbed out of a car with a "Zimbabwe" license plate to a standing ovation. The 84-year-old autocrat is popular in the region because he is seen as standing up to the West.

Health & Fitness

Weighing in on workout do's and don'ts

By JEANNINE STEIN
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The weight room can be a confusing place for gym-goers. Often armed with too little information about how to handle weight and cable machines and free weights, they are ripe for making blunders—and it can cost them, leading to major and minor injuries. We asked five Southern California trainers: What's the worst mistake you've seen people make in the weight room?

Janel Bilal shows proper biceps-curl form on the left; to the right, bad posture and shoulder rotation. LOS ANGELES TIMES

Nina Moore, trainer

The Sports Club/LA:

"Not doing a proper warm-up before training. You'll see someone come in at 6 a.m. and the heaviest thing they've picked up so far is their gym bag, and they go right into doing a bench press with 175 pounds without doing any warm-up at all. If you don't do a warm-up, that's when you increase your risk of injury (pulled and strained muscles and ligaments, and sore joints). An active warm-up prepares the body for the work to be performed. Doing warm-up exercises is also a great way to (engage) the core muscles.

"On the floor (at the gym) we keep a bike, an ergometer (an upper-body exercise machine that uses arms and hands to rotate pedals), jump-ropes and (stability) balls for people to warm up. Or, you can do an exercise without adding resistance—such as body weight lunges as a preparation for doing lunges with weights. You can also do push-ups.

"A good warm-up should include about 10 minutes of activity. That's also a time when you can clear your head and focus on what you want to accomplish during the workout."

Rob Glick

Co-founder of Global Fitness Solutions, member of IDEA Health & Fitness Association:

"People don't understand about maintaining their trunk and spine stability while lifting weights. They're just throwing the weights up rather than lifting the weights and I'm thinking, `Oh my God, I can hear their back screaming.'

"When doing weights on a fixed machine, you're making an isolated movement and strengthening your body in this one position. So you relax your core, because the bench is giving you stability. Free weights and cables are much more functional, so that's where the deeper understanding of the core comes into play. Core strength and core control can be a stabilizer and an anchor. If I want my core to work as a stabilizer, I want to maintain a nice, proper posture and then do the movement. Slow down initially and connect to the movement properly. Don't worry about how much weight you're lifting. Once you understand how to do it, let your body be your guide to how much weight and how many reps you should do."

Mike Ryan

Trainer with Gold's Gym Fitness Institute:

"Guys especially always want to lift as much as they can. That's the worst thing in the world, because weight training is all about form and technique, it's not a weight-loading competition. It's a good idea to always err on the side of caution and build up weight appropriately. Otherwise, it opens people up to injury.

"I hate to say it, but guys need to check their ego at the door. When you realize you can't move a weight properly, be smart about it. Drop the weight and go lighter.

"I've seen everything from a sore back to a pulled hamstring and quad. In terms of bigger injuries, I've seen people tear their pectorals doing a bench press. That's just a nasty injury. The nagging injuries are fairly common—people tweaking their back—and those are preventable.

"It's great that the enthusiasm is there, but you have to pace yourself. This is a lifestyle change—you're in it for the long run. Take your time and let the muscles mature as you develop them."

Janel Bilal

Personal trainer, 24 Hour Fitness Magic Johnson Sport Club:

"I see a lot of bad form, especially protracted shoulders. Some people don't have proper stabilization through the shoulder area, and during an exercise like a seated row, you see shoulders that are curled forward. Many people are sitting at a desk all day or commuting long distances, and they're in that slouched position. Or they play a sport such as tennis, where there is a lot of forward shoulder rotation.

"You shouldn't rotate your shoulder while you're working another muscle group. For example, your shoulders shouldn't be rolling while you're doing a bicep curl. Pressing the shoulders down and squeezing the rhomboids (muscles in the upper back) will lock in the shoulder girdle and keep that area stable enough to get the muscle group you're working to carry the majority of the weight."

Chalene Johnson

Fitness instructor and video and fitness infomercial host:

"The No. 1 thing is too much momentum with the weights. The speed of the repetition is way too fast. People are literally swinging the weights and lifting them so fast that the velocity builds momentum but decreases the overload to the muscle, which makes the exercise less effective. The slower the speed, the more effective.

"The quicker you can reach overload by going slower, the more effective the muscle contraction and the results. You're trying to make the exercise as difficult as possible to break the muscle fiber down. Overload creates a momentary failure so that you can't do another rep, and that process breaks the muscle fiber down. That's what causes the muscle to repair itself, leading to increased muscle mass, a higher metabolism and decreased body fat.

"It's not the number on the side of the weight that makes a difference; it's how difficult you can make the rep."

Gene domino effect behind brain, pancreatic tumors

WASHINGTON (AP)—Scientists have mapped the cascade of genetic changes that turn normal cells in the brain and pancreas into two of the most lethal cancers. The result points to a new approach for fighting tumors and maybe even catching them sooner. Genes blamed for one person's brain tumor were different from the culprits for the next patient, making the puzzle of cancer genetics even more complicated.

But Friday's research also found that clusters of seemingly disparate genes all work along the same pathways. So instead of today's hunt for drugs that target a single gene, the idea is to target entire pathways that most patients share. Think of delivering the mail to a single box at the end of the cul-de-sac instead of at every doorstep.

The three studies, published in the journals Science and Nature, mark a milestone in cancer genetics.

"This is the next wave," said Dr. Phillip Febbo of Duke University's Institute for Genome Sciences and Policy, who was not involved with the new research. "What's really important is that finding those common elements within the landscape suggests there are therapeutic interventions that can help the whole group."

Despite 30 years of laborious work, scientists until now have found only a fraction of the genetic alterations required to cause any of the 200 diseases that collectively are called cancer. Different tumors require a different domino effect of genetic changes to arise, and to determine their severity and even which treatments will work.

The new maps do not include just mutated genes. They cite missing ones, extra ones, and overactive or underactive ones, too, in the most comprehensive look ever at human tumors.

Teams led by Johns Hopkins University examined more than 20,000 genes in tumors taken from 24 pancreatic cancer patients and 22 patients with the most dangerous brain tumor, called glioblastoma multiforme. Separately, The Cancer Genome Atlas project—a government-funded network of 18 medical centers—analyzed 600 genes in glioblastomas from 206 patients.

The Hopkins teams found hundreds of genetic changes, including a particularly intriguing gene named IDH1. Twelve percent of glioblastoma patients, mostly young ones, harbored a mutated version that brought longer survival: a median of 3.8 years compared with the 1.1 years for patients without the mutation.

If additional study proves that effect, doctors soon might use an IDH1 test to help determine prognosis, said Hopkins' Dr. Victor Velculescu, who led the glioblastoma work. If so, the next question is whether certain drugs work better in those patients as well.

The bigger discovery involved cancer's genetic chaos. No tumors were identical. The typical pancreatic cancer contained 63 genetic alterations and the average brain tumor 60, Hopkins researchers reported in Science.

Fortunately, "genes don't work alone," said Hopkin's Dr. Kenneth Kinzler, who led the pancreatic work. Figure out which genes cluster in which pathways and "a simpler picture emerges."

The Hopkins team identified 12 core pathways that were abnormal in most pancreatic tumors. In Nature, The Cancer Genome Atlas researchers reported three core pathways at work in most glioblastomas.

The pathways do different things. Some allow damaged DNA to escape repair. Some switched off protective factors meant to suppress tumors.

Finding drugs that block those pathways will not be easy, said Dr. Bert Vogelstein of Hopkins and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, who oversaw the research. They also may cause more side effects than current "targeted therapies" that work against only a specific gene defect.

But companies already are researching drugs to block a particular enzyme pathway implicated in the studies.

Also, pathway blockers should work in larger groups of patients, Vogelstein said. One particular pancreatic cancer pathway contains a variety of genes mutated in only a few people, but regardless of which gene ran amok, the whole pathway was broken in every tumor studied. "Even though it sounds complex, it's actually allowing us to simplify the complex into pathways that will allow us, I think, to truly understand cancer for the first time and take a much more rational approach to treatment," said Dr. Anna Barker of the National Cancer Institute, who co-directs the cancer atlas project. "I'm more optimistic."

Moreover, the work suggests possible ways to catch cancer earlier, by tracing mutant DNA floating through the bloodstream well before tumors themselves start to spread, Vogelstein added. "I don't think that's any longer science fiction."

Life & Style

Hyatt Regency Saipan wins Wine Rally

By KRISTI EATON
Photos by JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hyatt Regency Saipan won the 9th Annual Pacific Wines and Spirits Wine Rally, allowing the hotel employees a chance to travel to wineries in Napa Valley, California.

Hyatt won the competition with 1,497 points, and will have the chance to travel to Napa Valley to visit the Rodney Strong, Robert Mondavi, Opus One, Quintessa, and Rutherford Ranch wineries.

"Despite the economy here, we try to give out incentives to show appreciation of their hard work," said Orleyne Tabucanon of Pacific Wine and Spirits.

Winners of this year's wine rally were announced Thursday at Aqua Resort Club, with Brad Ruszala acting as the event's host.

Pacific Islands Club won second place with 1,078 points and Aqua Resort Club came in third with 493 points.

Lito Espino from Aqua Resort won the $500 giveaway.

This is the first year that Saipan hotels and restaurants had their own rally. In the past, the hotels and restaurants competed against their Guam counterparts.

Fifteen hotels and restaurants on Saipan took part and more than 250 people attended Thursday's rally.

To mark next year's 10th anniversary, the wine rally will have even more prizes, Tabucanon said.

Hyatt Regency Saipan management and staff gather for a photo after winning the 9th Annual Pacific Wines and Spirits Wine Rally Thursday night.

Guam's Food Guy Ken Stewart with friends and guests.

Lucky raffle winner Lito Espino from Aqua Resort poses with Pacific Wine & Spirits general manager Dan Matsuno, PWS' Orleyne Tabucanon, and event host Brad Ruzsala after winning $500 in cash.

Hotel and restaurant staff participate on the wine toss game.

Pacific Wine & Spirits general manager Dan Matsuno and staff with Hyatt Regency Hotel's Daryl Thong.

Palms Resort Saipan's Christina Lustre and Minako Kaya pose with their friendly staff.

Staff from different hotels and restaurants show their camaraderie during the Pacific Wines and Spirits Wine Rally.

Aqua Resort Club staff smile for the camera during the annual event.

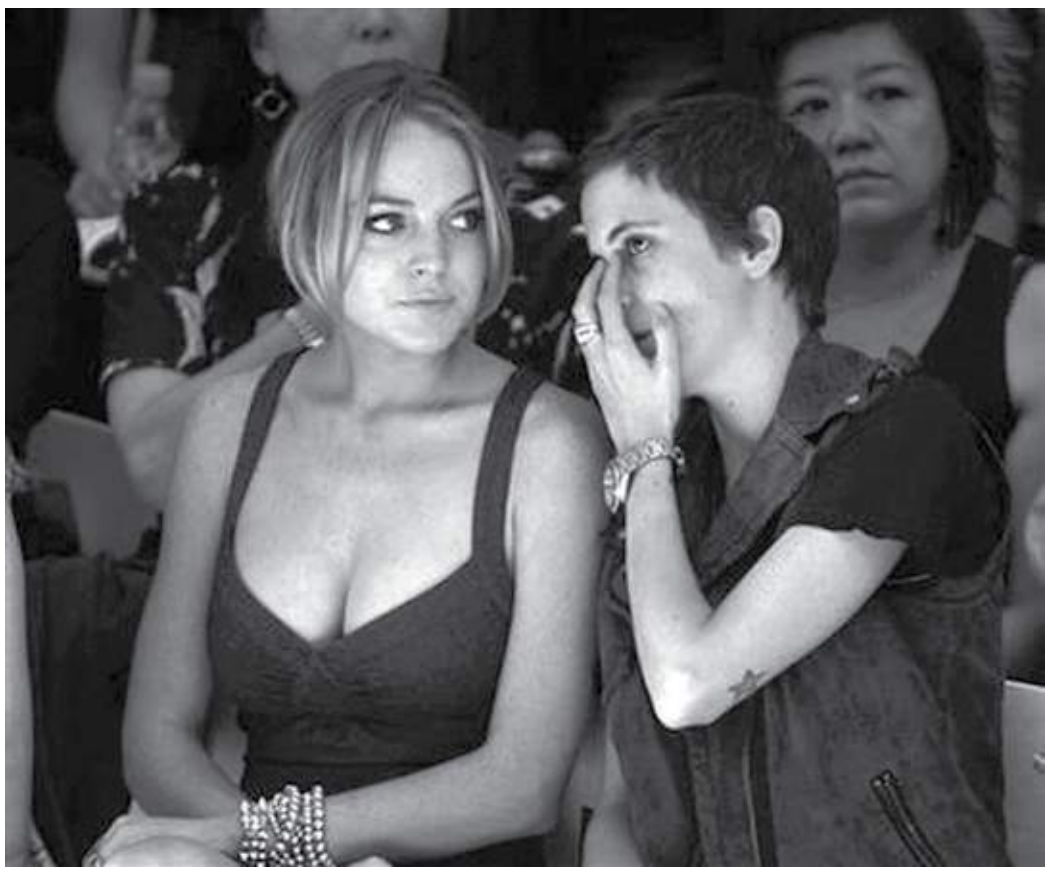
Featured wines were served to the guests.

Hyatt Regency Saipan management and staff cheer after winning the 9th Annual Pacific Wines and Spirits Wine Rally Thursday night.

Lindsay and Samantha rock the runway crowd

NEW YORK (AP)—Nobody draws attention like Lindsay Lohan and gal pal Samantha Ronson.

The duo sat in the front row for the Saturday morning presentation of Ronson's sister Charlotte's spring collection at New York Fashion Week, where they were immediately swarmed by photographers who brushed past other famous folks like Sean Lennon to get shots of the actress and DJ.



AP

Actress Lindsay Lohan, left, and Samantha Ronson attend the Charlotte Ronson 2009 Spring Collection in Bryant Park during Fashion Week in New York on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008.

Lohan sported a denim dress and blue pumps, and wore her blonde hair pulled back in a bun; Ronson had on a black T-shirt and a gray skinny jeans and vest - she usually incorporates a hat into her rocker look, but this time she opted to show off her pixie haircut.

They stood up for a standing ovation when Charlotte Ronson appeared on the runway after the show, and made a quick exit as media chased them backstage (where they hid in a VIP lounge).

Actress Emma Roberts, the niece of Julia Roberts, joked that she was stuck in a "Lindsay traffic jam" as she tried to leave the crowded event.

In-demand music producer Mark Ronson - brother of Charlotte and Samantha - deejayed the music at the show.

He declined comment when asked about the buzz over Lohan and his sister, but said he was proud of his family.

"I think we're just all driven and love what we do," he said of his siblings.

Timberlake, Cyrus among the stars at Fashion Rocks

NEW YORK (AP)—Justin Timberlake, Miley Cyrus and Charlize Theron were among the celebrities who appeared at the fifth annual Fashion Rocks concert celebrating the relationship between music and fashion.

They walked the red carpet Friday night at Radio City Music Hall amid a media circus angling for glamour shots of other stars including Fergie, Rihanna, Chris Brown and the "Gossip Girl" gang.

Brown, the R&B heartthrob, soaked up all the attention with a smile as he showed off his dapper ensemble of a black vest and shirt, gray pants, shiny shoes and diamond stud earrings.

"To be a musician and a great entertainer, you have to be a trendsetter. To be a trendsetter, you have to know fashion - and I have fun with it," explained the singer, who later changed into khakis and a black shirt and scarf for a performance of his hit song "Forever."

The event will air Tuesday in a two-hour special on CBS. Proceeds will benefit Stand Up To Cancer, a program established by the Entertainment Industry Foundation to raise money for cancer research.

Stand Up To Cancer held a live telethon that aired simultaneously on ABC, NBC and CBS on Friday night.

Fashion Rocks provided a live feed to the fundraising show of a performance of more than a dozen divas - including Beyonce, Mariah Carey, Natasha Bedingfield, Fergie, Rihanna and Cyrus - who gathered on stage to sing their new charity song, "Just Stand Up." Theron and fellow Oscar winner Hilary Swank introduced the ladies' collaboration.

AP

Mary J. Blige, left, Beyonce Knowles, center, and Miley Cyrus appear on stage during Conde Nast's Fashion Rocks show, Friday, Sept. 5, 2008 in New York.

Bedingfield said she lost her grandmother to the disease several years ago, and was thrilled to share the spotlight with the other singers.

"This is the first time we're all together singing the song," she said backstage. "It was really special. It was really like a sisterhood, like a bond. ... We're all used to being the stars - the only star in the room - and it was really nice I think that everyone could just come together and really support each other."

Other performers included Timberlake, Kid Rock, Keith Urban, Duffy, the Pussycat Dolls and the Black Eyed Peas.

A highlight was Timberlake and Beyonce's sizzling duet of "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing," which channeled the soulful sound of the classic song's original singers, Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell.

Stars mingled and sipped cocktails backstage in the green room, where Leighton Meester of the CW teen drama "Gossip Girl" and her actor-beau Sebastian Stan hung out before she introduced Duffy's performance of "Mercy."

Meester's "Gossip" co-star Chace Crawford chatted up actress Hayden Panettiere, who embraced her rock-star side in a silver Ferragamo minidress and black heels. "I usually try to mix class and then really funk it out," Panettiere said of her personal style. "It's rock meets class. I try - not always succeed, but I try."

London calling at New York Fashion Week

NEW YORK (AP)—Designers at New York Fashion week heard London calling - from 1975.

The looks of the London youth movment in the years when mod morphed into punk dominated runways Saturday in the second day of spring previews. Short skirts and tight pants kept the skinny profile fresh, paired with - what else? - edgy black.

Charlotte Ronson played on the theme to a crowd that included Lindsay Lohan in a denim corset dress with bright blue pumps.

Rag & Bone designers Marcus Wainwright and David Neville were taken with the era after watching the Anton Corbijn film "Control" about the British band Joy Division. Their collection Friday wasn't the only ones inspired by the era's nonconformity, and the Fashion Rock concert featured a tribute to punk led by Fergie.

The look was in contrast to another emerging trend at the Bryant Park tents: easy, vacation-bound elegance. New York Fashion Week runs through Sept. 12, with more than 100 shows over eight days.

ROCK & REPUBLIC

Rock & Republic sees next spring's styles in black and white - with nothing in between. Saturday's runway presentation was all about micro minis or long and lean pants, with nary a color in sight.

For a brand that made its name in denim, the emphasis was on formfitting dresses, all but a handful of which were barely long enough to cover the models' undergarments. One black dress with all-over ruching actually looked more like a retro-style bathing suit.

Still, some of the emerging spring trends were represented, including one-shoulder tops, zipper details and skinny jeans that pooled around the ankles, draping around towering platform heels. And the only thing skinnier than the legs on the guys' jeans were the ties.

ABAETE

There was something for the nice girl—as well as something for the naughty one—on the Abaete catwalk.

Designer Laura Poretzky described her spring collection at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week as the "dichotomy of the two sides of a woman." A cute chambray sundress with a ruffled front and petticoat underneath shared the runway with skintight bodysuits with mesh side panels.

Abaete also furthered some trends that appear to be on the horizon: corset-style dresses, one-shoulder tops and killer gladiator platform sandals. Poretzky's version, which will be available at Payless, had a zipper on the back of the ankle to give a hard-rock edge to the shoe.

Her muse wears everything from mod dresses with contrasts of black and white with pops of bright sorbet colors, to flirty shirred skirts that barely reached the middle of the thigh.

CHARLOTTE RONSON

With two celebrity DJ siblings (including Lohan gal pal Samantha), Charlotte Ronson knows the club crowd. With her spring fashion collection, she showed she can dress them too.

There was a hint of irony in many of the outfits, such as a gingham print gone sexy thanks to a sheer fabric and a knit bustier top paired with skinny-leg sweatpants. And almost all the looks were worn with fishnet socks and platform shoes with towering heels.

But even with those young urban looks, Ronson proved she could court a more sophisticated customer with a corset-style dress in a subtle cheetah-print pique fabric and a feminine ruffle-front frock in a floral pattern that blended coral, lavender and brown.

Ronson also showed a knack for knits, including a sweater dress in teal and blush pink with cutout shoulders.

LACOSTE

Lacoste broke down its new collection into three different types of crocodiles, playing off the brand's famous logo: the silver croc, the sporty croc and the hipster croc.

Designer Christophe Lemaire brought the silver type to the Mediterranean, offering long, relaxed button-front dresses over a retro mailot or crocheted bikini for the daytime, and a sexy halter top with a plunging V-neck paired with wide-leg linen gauchos for the evening.

The palette was sepia tones of brown, dusty pink and off-white, the same colors used for the stripes of an adorable sportier tennis dress with a lace-up neckline. Shorts for women were super-shrunken, while the men's shorts hit the mid thigh.

The silhouette got even smaller with the more urban styles, inspired by the mod 60s. "Slim-fit cuts are the rule rather than the exception in this new line," the designer said.

NICOLE MILLER

Nicole Miller aimed to demonstrate with her spring collection that cheerfulness and sophistication are not mutually exclusive.

The vibe at her show Friday night was playful thanks to a color palette that ranged from teal to coral and prints inspired by the good-luck symbols from voodoo flags.

Dresses are Miller's specialty and she didn't disappoint with draped silhouettes that followed an emerging trend of casual elegance. The best ones included a scarf-print jersey one, a purple racer-back gown and a green-yellow linen viscose gown with one strap beaded with crystals.

On some pieces, though, Miller went overboard with fabric, putting a giant ruffle on the shoulder of tops that she called spirit wings. Also, cropped harem pants with too-roomy thighs and a tight band just below the knee would be hard for any woman without model legs to pull off.

ERIN FETHERSTON

Erin Fetherston floated her newest collection down the runway, mining both the daytime and nighttime skies with a theme of "east of the sun and west of the moon."

The first outfit on the runway Friday night was a stunner: an asymmetrical white chiffon tank, "sunburst" jacquard pants in yellow and white with extremely exaggerated wide legs and a shimmery sequin sash. It sent the tone for one ethereal outfit after another - most of which married sexiness and femininity in white or light, pastel colors. There also was a beautiful watercolor-style print that mixed blue, blush, light yellow and green.

But the gimmick went too far with silhouettes that mimicked the clouds with giant puffs of fabric, sometimes on the shoulder, sometimes on the hem, and, worse, sometimes around the hips.

Jermaine Dupri party helps kick of MTV VMA bashes

AP

Hip hop producer Jermaine DuPri, left, watches rapper The Game, upper right, defeat Bow Wow, center, 55-23 in an Xbox 360 Madden football video game showdown for charity in Los Angeles, Friday, Sept. 5, 2008.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Don't let the celebrities at a Jermaine Dupri party distract you from partying, or you might get an admonishment from the host himself.

"At Jermaine Dupri parties, (people) don't stand around taking pictures," he said, in more colorful language, as some at his MTV Video Music Awards kickoff party focused their cameras on stars in the crowd Friday night. "It's star-studded all around this (place)."

The superproducer and sometime rapper threw the party, along with his Tag Records, to kick off the weekend of parties being held for Sunday's MTV VMAs and to promote the label's new artist, rapper Q, who performed.

Dupri might have been generous by describing the crowd as "star-studded": The biggest celebrity sighting was that of actor Taye Diggs and rapper Fabolous. Angela and Vanessa Simmons of MTV's reality show "Run's House" also attended.

Still, the celebrity quotient didn't seem to influence how much fun the crowd had. The dance floor was packed into the early morning as old-school rapper D-Nice worked the turntables, providing a steady stream of hip-hop hits to keep the party jumping.

Dupri's party was just one of the pre-VMA events being held on Friday that lured celebrities. Earlier, the Gibson guitar company hosted a gifting suite that drew stars including reality TV villain Omorosa and "Grey's Anatomy's" Justin Chambers, his wife and their children.

Chambers wasn't sure if he would attend Sunday's VMAs, but said there was one celebrity he was looking forward to seeing on the broadcast.

"I hear Britney Spears is opening up. I don't know if I'm excited but I would like to see her make a comeback from last year," referring to the pop queen's disastrous kickoff performance at the 2007 VMAs.

'The Wrestler' wins Venice Film Fest top award

VENICE, Italy (AP)—Darren Aronofsky's "The Wrestler" has won the top award at the Venice Film Festival.

The film awarded the Golden Lion on Saturday stars Mickey Rourke as a wrestler forced into retirement who strikes up a romance with an aging stripper played by Marisa Tomei.

Russia's Aleksey German Jr. won the award for best director for "Bumaznyj soldat (Paper Soldier)," a story set in the early days of the space program in the Soviet Union.

Italian Silvio Orlando was crowned best actor for his role in Pupi Avati's "Il Papa' di Giovanna," (Giovanna's Father), about a father's relationship with his troubled adult daughter.

France's Dominique Blanc won best actress for playing a jealousy-struck woman in "L'Autre (The Other One)," directed by Patrick Mario Bernard and Pierre Trividic.

Director Darren Aronofsky holds aloft the Golden Lion award for his film 'The Wrestler' during the awards presentation at the 65th edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008.

AP

AP

In this image provided by Carlo Allegri for Focus Features, the cast and crew from "Burn Before Reading," clockwise from first row left, directors Joel Cohen and Ethan Cohen, actors John Malkovich, Tilda Swinton, Brad Pitt and Frances McDormand pose for a cast photo during the International Film Festival in Toronto, Friday, Sept 5, 2008.

Pitt plays dumb in Coens' 'Burn After Reading'

TORONTO (AP)—Brad Pitt has wanted to work with the Coen brothers for ages. Then he got wind of the birdbrain they had written for him to play.

"I've been knocking on the brothers' door for a few years, so I was really happy when they called me," Pitt told reporters at the Toronto International Film Festival on Saturday, a day after Joel and Ethan Coen's comedy "Burn After Reading" premiered there.

"Until I read the piece, and I was real upset," Pitt jokingly added.

Pitt's character, an ignoramus in way over his head on a blackmail scheme, is among a gaggle of boneheads caroming about in "Burn After Reading," whose cast includes his and the Coens' frequent collaborator George Clooney, plus John Malkovich, Tilda Swinton, Richard Jenkins and Joel Coen's wife, Frances McDormand.

Opening in theaters Friday, the movie casts Pitt and McDormand as fitness trainers who stumble on a disc containing classified documents and try to extort cash from the ex-CIA analyst (Malkovich) who was the origin of the leaked data.

Pitt plays the goof to the hilt, his character's inept attempts at cloak-and-dagger intrigue providing some of the movie's biggest laughs.

"The leading man role is usually the guy who's got the answers, figures things out and defuses the bomb within seconds and is always experienced. And all of that's pretty good for the ego sometimes. But it's more fun playing guys who make the wrong choices, have limited experience and make presumptions," Pitt said.

Wearing fitness club shorts and T-shirt, with his hair teased into a puffy tower with a blond streak, Pitt also toyed with his movie star looks in "Burn After Reading."

"We had kind of a competition going on the set as to who had the most ridiculous hair, and I think you may have won, Brad," co-star Swinton, whose character has a strange, swirled hairdo herself, said at a festival news conference alongside Pitt, the Coens and Malkovich.

"We were all going in for that Javier Bardem prize," Swinton said, referring to the odd page-boy hairdo Bardem wore in last year's Coen brothers crime thriller, "No Country for Old Men."

In an interview with The Associated Press a day earlier, the Coens said Pitt's hairdo was a happy accident. Ethan Coen said they had figured that as a gymnasium worker, the character might have a crew cut.

"Just by accident, Brad had done a commercial or photo shoot or something where his hair had been streaked, and he went in for a fitting for wardrobe for this with this kind of leftover hair, so we went, `Oh, how about that?'" Ethan Coen said.

Pitt has tended toward action and drama, including "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," a tale due out late this year adapted from an F. Scott Fitzgerald story about a man who ages backward from old age toward infancy.

Aiming for laughs with "Burn After Reading" did not seem out of place to Pitt, though.

"I feel I've been doing comedies for years, but maybe they weren't so funny," Pitt said.

Long-distance relationship has turned distant and cool

Dear Abby

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a long-distance relationship with my girlfriend, "Elli," for two years. We haven't seen each other for almost six months, and now she has decided she wants time apart.

Our relationship was suffering during my last year of graduate school because I wasn't able to give Elli the time she deserved. Now I have graduated and have a job that gives me more time to dedicate to her.

She decided when I relocated that she would not move to the city with me. She says she wants to keep me in her life, but she "needs space" to find herself. We schedule chats on the phone and try to avoid discussing the status of our relationship, but we usually end up arguing and crying.

I suggested visiting her now that I can afford to, so we can talk through our differences in person, but Elli says it would be too much for her to bear. She says she loves me and that she's doing this for the good of both of us. I miss her terribly. I think about her constantly, but I don't want to smother her and have her resent me. Is there more going on here than meets the eye?

OUT IN THE COLD IN D.C.

DEAR OUT IN THE COLD: Yes, there probably is. When someone you haven't seen in six months tells you that you need more time apart, it means that she isn't as committed to having a relationship as you are. She may love you, but the question is, is she still IN love with you? The next time you chat, ask her that.

Please realize that when someone says seeing you would be too much to bear, it sends a strong message—regardless of whether or not it's the one you want to hear.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am writing about a change I have seen in church. I accept the loud guitar music and informal settings, although I do miss the traditional hymns and formal altars.

What I cannot get used to is the forced "friendly" greeting and handshaking. I attend church to meditate and worship with my family. I do not go to shake hands with strangers and give them a greeting dictated by a pastor.

I like people. I am naturally caring, outgoing and friendly. However, I believe that a greeting or handshake should come from my own heart.

I have mentioned this to friends and family from all faiths, ages and walks of life. None of them like this scheduled "greeting" either. Many say they head for the restroom at that time, turn their backs or just shake hands with the people they came with, come to church late to avoid it, or don't come at all. Others feel the practice is unsanitary.

I suggest that church leaders take an anonymous poll and ask how many in their congregations agree with me. What do you think, Abby?

MINISTER'S DAUGHTER, CAYUCOS, CALIF.

DEAR DAUGHTER: Thank you for asking my opinion. Here it is: Something is wrong in our fragmented society if, for one moment in a house of God, people cannot find it in their hearts to reach out and make sure that everyone feels included and welcome. And for those who fear it is unsanitary—bring small bottles of hand sanitizer.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: What is a polite way to let someone know that reading a book in your company, when you have been invited to visit, is offensive?

NOT A BOOKWORM

DEAR NOT: Picking up a book and reading in the face of a guest is a not very subtle hint that you have overstayed your welcome. And the appropriate response should be, "Well, I'll get going now," followed by a hasty exit.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! I'M GOING!
HEY! LEGGO! I CAN WALK MYSELF! I JUST HAVE TO... OK! LOOK, I'M GOING! I'M GOING!
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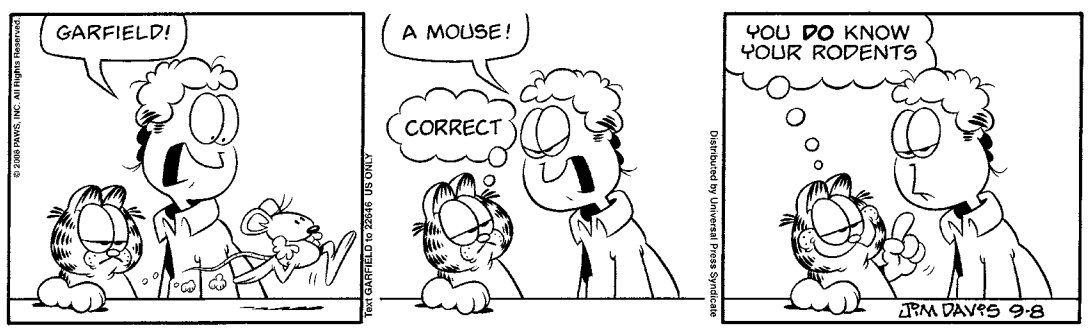
9/8
SURE, YOU THINK SCHOOL'S GREAT NOW. BUT IN A COUPLE OF HOURS YOU'LL MISS ME! YOU'LL SEE!

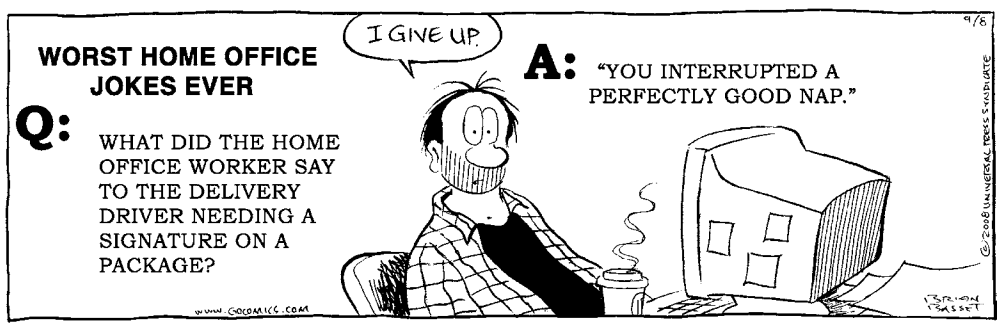
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WORST HOME OFFICE JOKES EVER
Q: WHAT DID THE HOME OFFICE WORKER SAY TO THE DELIVERY DRIVER NEEDING A SIGNATURE ON A PACKAGE?
I GIVE UP.
A: "YOU INTERRUPTED A PERFECTLY GOOD NAP."
9/6
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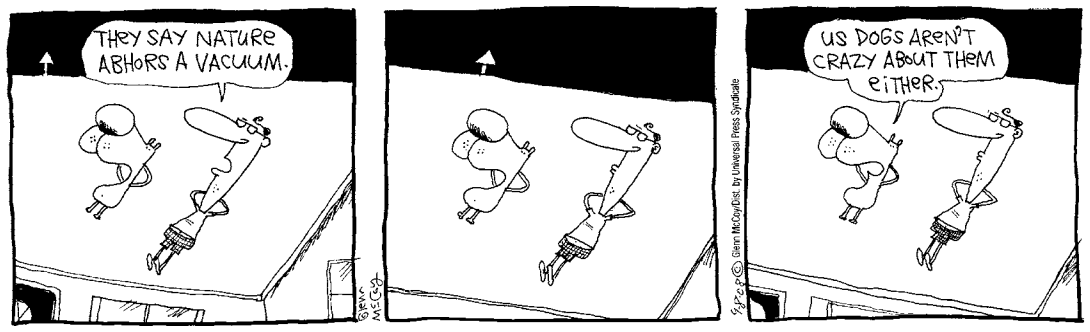
BRIAN BASSET

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


THEY SAY NATURE ABHORS A VACUUM.
US DOGS AREN'T CRAZY ABOUT THEM EITHER.
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Shock partner
4 Perjurers
9 "Mayday!"
12 That woman
13 Bother
14 Choose
15 Ego-centric's problem
17 Meadow
18 Vegas-based TV series
19 Receding
21 With face hidden
24 Kind
25 Yoko of music
26 Atl. state
28 Dog walker's tether
31 Ridge raised by a heavy blow
33 Sinbad's bird
35 Use a paper towel
36 Marble cake pattern
38 Tie up the phone
40 U.K. fliers
41 Pool hall supply
43 Powerful
45 Church VIP
47 Brazilian resort city
48 Deterio-rate
49 "To be or not to be," e.g.
54 Tokyo's old name
55 Reserved or pre-served
56 Swiss canton
57 Apiece
58 Actress Winona
59 Quaint stopover

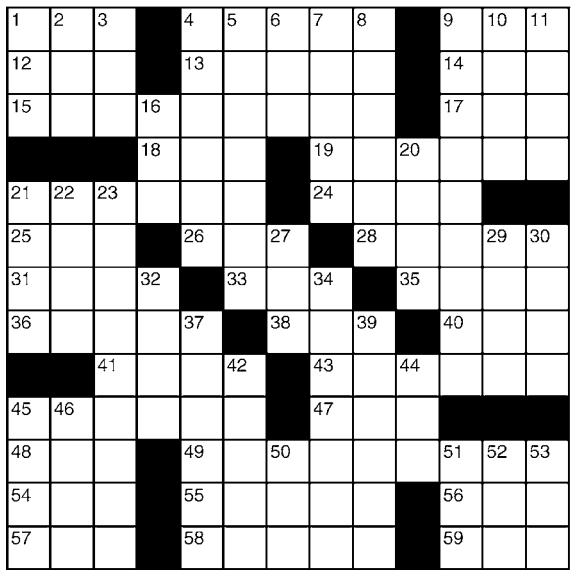
DOWN

1 Donkey
2 Personal question?
3 Moray
4 Expired, as a subscrip-tion
5 Loop member?
6 Black-bird
7 "— are red ..."
8 Logo
9 Card game for one
10 Admitting cus-tomers
11 Male deer
16 "Eewww!"
20 Make tea
21 Cuts the grass
22 From the beginning
23 Lawyer in London
27 Journal
29 Bridge
30 Weight
32 Verifiable
34 Whim
37 Landlord
39 Hot-water heater
42 Un-emotional
44 Also
45 Get ready, for short
46 Took the bus
50 Cover
51 On the — vive
52 Samovar
53 Yang counter-part

Solution time: 24 mins.

P	R	O	■	A	M	M	O	■	M	A	S	H
L	O	P	■	D	E	E	P	■	A	S	H	Y
U	S	E	■	D	O	L	T	■	T	E	E	D
M	A	D	C	O	W	D	I	S	E	A	S	E
■	■	■	E	N	S	■	M	A	Y	■	■	■
B	A	W	L	S	■	B	U	M	■	F	E	W
E	V	I	L	■	L	A	M	■	F	E	T	A
G	A	G	■	F	I	R	■	C	L	E	A	R
■	■	■	P	I	N	■	A	A	U	■	■	■
M	A	K	E	B	E	E	F	J	E	R	K	Y
A	B	E	T	■	U	P	T	O	■	O	N	E
M	E	E	T	■	P	E	E	L	■	M	E	G
A	L	L	Y	■	S	E	R	E	■	P	E	G

Saturday's answer 9-8



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jonathan Taylor Thomas, 27; Pink, 29; David Arquette, 37; Neko Case, 38

Happy Birthday: Look for a way to expand your interests and your relationships. Change is upon you, so make sure you only allow what will honor your personal dreams, hopes and wishes. You have the added drive, so put it to good use. Face any emotional issues and clear the air so you can move forward. Your numbers are 3, 10, 14, 25, 28, 32, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): If you expand too quickly or take on too much you will fall short of your goals, get stressed out and cause problems in your personal and professional life. Don't fall victim to temptation. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Take time to smell the roses, enjoy the people and places you are fond of and do something special just for yourself. Don't scrimp when it comes to your quality of life and your health and well-being. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Extend your weekend, if possible, and plan a special day. A great idea can turn into a lucrative venture if you talk to someone who has a little experience and an interest in what you want to do. Try something new. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't let anyone persuade you to take over his or her duties. A problem at home will leave you concerned about one of your relationships. Don't assume anything. Instead, stay calm and wait to see how things unfold. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Rely on a friend for backup if you start to fall behind. A partnership looks very promising. Speak from the heart and don't take no for an answer. Your generosity and kindness will be hard to resist. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Emotional matters will get the better of you if you don't learn to say no. Someone will push you to the limit if you let him or her. Don't allow your love for someone to cost you financially. Get tough. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Confusion may set in if you let your heart rule your head. Back up and regain your position by recognizing what is best for you and your family. Take a conservative approach and you will avoid a loss. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Don't make financial changes or promises that leave you short. Be careful about spending and stick to the budget you set for yourself. Take responsibility for your actions and you will find a solution to any problem that arises. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Put your ideas on paper and proceed. Once you convince people in the know to take a look at your plan, you can move ahead safely. Keep things small and you will impress people willing to contribute financial assistance. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't give in to someone putting pressure on you. Love can cause you to make foolish mistakes. Don't lose sight of what you have and who continually takes from you. You may have to make some changes. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Put your heart and soul into stabilizing your life financially, medically and legally. Once you have paid back what's owed or at least have a plan, the rest will be easy. A creative idea will help you bring in some extra cash. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't let a partner talk you out of doing something you believe in. A deal may be on the line; if you waffle it will be withdrawn. Don't let uncertainty on someone else's part alter your way of thinking. Stay in control. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You think big and accomplish a lot. You are versatile, intuitive, strong-willed and intent on getting your way. You aren't afraid of hard work or competition.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

3	9			6			7	
1		4						6
	8		4		3	5		
		3	8	4		2		
7			1		6			9
		6		3	7	4		
		9	3		8		5	
2						1		3
	3			7			4	8

Difficulty Level ★ 9/08

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	9	3	1	6	4	5	2	8
1	6	5	2	7	8	4	3	9
8	2	4	9	5	3	7	6	1
5	1	2	3	4	7	8	9	6
6	4	8	5	9	1	3	7	2
3	7	9	8	2	6	1	5	4
9	8	6	7	1	5	2	4	3
2	5	1	4	3	9	6	8	7
4	3	7	6	8	2	9	1	5

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 9/06

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE ABC ISLANDS **Solution: 6 letters**

C	L	E	K	R	O	N	S	U	T	C	A	C	N	C
A	U	P	N	R	E	T	S	E	W	E	T	S	O	A
R	R	R	B	E	A	C	H	E	H	C	N	O	C	S
I	C	I	A	O	R	P	A	K	I	P	A	A	A	I
B	E	I	K	C	N	U	M	I	W	S	V	B	L	N
B	S	V	T	O	A	A	O	B	O	E	B	O	F	O
E	E	O	A	O	K	O	I	T	S	O	P	T	A	R
A	S	A	U	W	X	D	N	R	C	W	R	S	B	A
N	U	S	Y	P	I	E	S	A	E	A	O	I	U	N
E	O	S	Y	S	M	T	T	D	I	M	U	H	C	J
D	H	H	C	A	A	A	N	T	I	L	L	E	Ⓢ	E
A	D	O	I	O	B	O	L	O	B	O	H	C	Ⓐ	S
R	N	P	G	L	U	V	A	C	A	T	I	O	Ⓝ	T
A	A	S	A	S	R	E	L	E	V	A	R	T	Ⓓ	A
P	L	A	N	T	A	I	N	S	E	A	F	O	O	D

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Antilles, Arikok, Aruba, Bays, Beach, Bike, Bocatabla, Bonaire, Cactus, Caribbean, Casino, Caves, Chobolobo, Conch, Curacao, Disco, Exotic, Flacon, Goats, Humid, Landhouses, Oranjestad, Papiamento, Parade, Park, Pika, Plantains, Rice, Sand, Scuba, Seafood, Shops, Shows, Snorkel, Soup, Stew, Stoba, Swim, Tour, Travelers, Vacation, Wave, Western

Last Saturday's Answer: Sheep

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2000 sq.ft Warehouse for Rent in Gualo Rai. For more information please call 235-6527/28

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WHATZIT Solution:
Turn the other cheek

EMPLOYMENT

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(3) Generator Technician
(3) Mechanic (3) Electrician
Please call 235-8973 for more inquiries.

Wanted: 1 Full-time Barista 18 y/o or above & IR/US citizen only bring your resume to the JAVA JOES CAFE-Dandan in person. No phone calls please.

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WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

CHEEK CHEEK

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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2007
Guard files sex harassment suit vs principa
2 hurt in Puerto Rico vehicular crash. PA
There is still hope for nonimm
all alien workers in the CNMI who are appealing to U.S. lawmakers to retain the provision in the federalization bills that would grant nonimmigrant status to long-term alien workers.
In her message, expected to be read
during today's prayer vigil at the Ameri-can Memorial Park's Amphitheater, Dorumal urged alien workers to "stand strong" as she vowed to continue sup-porting them "until the fight is won."
See DOROMAL on Page 4
joins Micronesia si
OPINION METER
This week's poll:
With what you know of the CUC situation, do you support the adoption of new regulatio

235- NEWS

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ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
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• 5-Liner	**$35**
• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

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Classified Ads

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REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Federer a win away from 5th straight title

NEW YORK (AP) — Ominous clouds overhead, the sort of hard court that troubled him this season underfoot, Roger Federer sensed something Saturday he hadn't in quite a while. He was playing exactly like that guy named Roger Federer.

The Federer who has won 33 consecutive matches and four consecutive championships at the U.S. Open. The Federer closing in on his 13th Grand Slam title.

"One more match," he said, "is all I need."

Only after Federer finished restoring order to his world by dismissing Novak Djokovic 6-3, 5-7, 7-5, 6-2 did Tropical Storm Hanna carry chaos to Flushing Meadows, dumping enough rain to suspend the other men's semifinal in progress and postpone the women's final.

So Serena Williams will seek her third U.S. Open and ninth major title against first-time Grand Slam finalist Jelena Jankovic on Sunday night.

The men's final was delayed until Monday for the first time since 1987, giving Federer plenty of time to rest. He also was going to be able to do some scouting Sunday when his nemesis, new No. 1 Rafael Nadal, was to resume his semifinal against No. 6 Andy Murray. They stopped Saturday with Murray leading 6-2, 7-6 (5), 2-3.

The winner will face a Federer who looked confident and supremely competent against Djokovic in their rematch of the 2007 final.

"I had moments out there where I really felt, 'This is how I normally play on hard court'—half-volleys, passing shots, good serving, putting the pressure on, playing with the wind, using it to my advantage," said Federer, who produced 20 aces and only one double-fault.

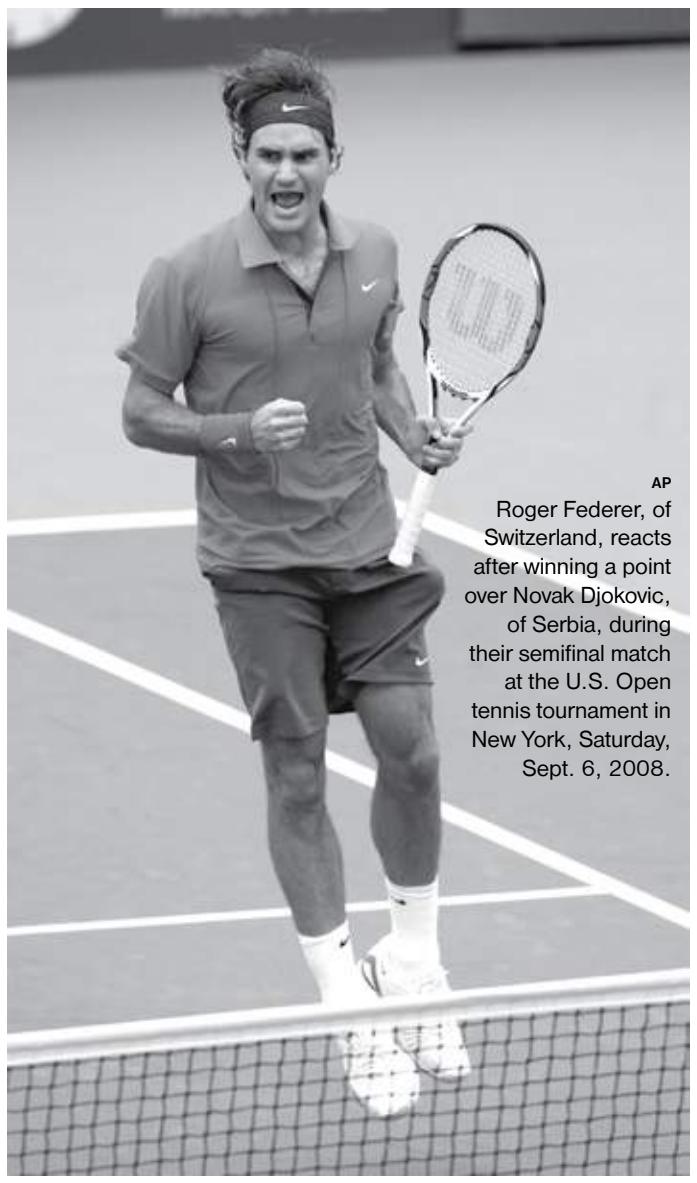
"I definitely had moments during today where I thought, 'This is how I would like to play every time.' So it was a very nice feeling, actually, to get that feeling back."

He dominated the opening set and the last 1 1/2 sets to reach his 13th final in the past 14 Grand Slam tournaments.

The one gap in that span was the Australian Open in January, when Djokovic upset Federer in the semifinals en route to his only major title. Perhaps that gave Federer extra motivation. This was hanging in the balance, too: Had Djokovic won Saturday and gone on to win the championship, he would have surpassed Federer in the rankings, dropping the longtime No. 1 all the way to No. 3.

"This was a big match. I knew it from when I saw the draw," said Federer, who called his pursuit of Pete Sampras' record of 14 career major championships "obviously still very much alive and everything is possible."

Also in his sights: Federer can become the first man since Bill Tilden in the 1920s to win five consecutive U.S. tennis championships.



AP

Roger Federer, of Switzerland, reacts after winning a point over Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, during their semifinal match at the U.S. Open tennis tournament in New York, Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008.

The fans in Arthur Ashe Stadium cheered for both the second-seeded Federer of Switzerland, and the third-seeded Djokovic of Serbia, but the reigning champion got more backing.

"I feel a little bit New Yorker right now," Federer said. "I definitely appreciate the efforts from the fans, supporting me and pushing me forward."

Maybe they remembered what happened Thursday on the same court. After beating Andy Roddick in the quarterfinals, Djokovic drew merciless boos by lashing out at the American, taking him to task for making light of the Serb's series of medical issues earlier in the week.

"It's been a very exhausting tournament, mentally and physically, for me," Djokovic said Saturday, declining to discuss the Roddick matter.

Or maybe the fans simply figured Federer needed an extra push during what, by his so-special standards, has been a sub-par season.

He has 12 losses, more than in any entire year from 2004-07.

He has two titles, his lowest total entering a U.S. Open since 2002. Neither came on the surface used at Flushing Meadows, and Federer said: "I have been struggling on hard court, you know. I have no problems admitting that."

Federer, though, never doubted he could summon his skills.

Nor did Djokovic.

"Roger is still there, you know. And even though people are talking about him not playing so well this year, he's still very consistent," Djokovic said. "That's his strength, you know. Whenever he needs to play well, he plays his best."

Sure did that Saturday.

It was as though Federer knew that those gray clouds could stop things at any moment and he wanted to get as far ahead as fast as possible. As he and Djokovic played on, tournament officials concerned about the impending rain shifted Nadal-Murray to Louis Armstrong Stadium instead of having it follow the first semifinal on Ashe.

When that shift was announced, thousands of fans booed, then ran from one court to the other. They likely would be thrilled to hear the U.S. Tennis Association is revisiting the idea of spending $100 million to put a retractable roof over the main court.

Murray compiled a 44-19 edge in winners against Nadal, and it came as no surprise that the Scotsman seemed reluctant to leave when rain came. Nadal-Murray started about 1 1/2 hours after the other semifinal began and was to resume about 26 hours after Federer-Djokovic concluded.

"I play wherever they schedule to play. ... The decision to change courts is understandable," Nadal said. "No complaints whatsoever."

Windy as it was while he played, Federer smacked a 130 mph serve to set up a forehand winner and end the first set against a Djokovic whose demeanor and strokes were duller than usual.

The real Djokovic showed up in the second set, striking shots more crisply, pressuring Federer more consistently. When Federer served while trailing 6-5, Djokovic earned three set points. The first two were erased, reminiscent of last year's final, when Djokovic wasted seven set points.

But Djokovic is no longer as inexperienced, nor Federer, seemingly, as invincible. This time, Djokovic returned a 121 mph serve and watched Federer rush an easy forehand on the third set point.

All tied.

Looking rattled as fans harassed him while he served, Djokovic put a forehand into the net, setting up break point at 5-5 in the third set. When Djokovic missed a volley, Federer had the break, a 6-5 lead - and a rousing chorus from the stands.

That roar grew louder a game later, when Djokovic hit a smash that would have ended the point against nearly anyone. Near a wall, Federer stretched and jumped and carved a winner that stunned Djokovic. Federer raised a fist imperiously, and five points later he danced in delight, the fourth set and momentum his.

By now, Djokovic was gasping for air between points, and when he sent a volley wide at the end of a 19-stroke point, Federer broke to a 5-2 lead in the fourth.

Moments later, the match was over, and Federer pumped both fists and bellowed.

He was back in the U.S. Open final. He was back, period.

Federer was asked whom he'd rather face next. Nadal routed him in the French Open final, edged him in the Wimbledon final and supplanted him atop the rankings last month.

"Who do I prefer?" Federer said, then smiled, knowing the words he was about to say would draw loud approval from the crowd. "I prefer the trophy. That's what I prefer."

Jim Furyk atop leaderboard at BMW Championship

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Jim Furyk quietly pumped his fist when his final putt of a marathon day disappeared in the cup. Even though it was for bogey, this was cause for a small celebration Saturday at the BMW Championship.

He played 36 holes over 10 hours on a soggy course that made it feel as though he were walking through sand. He took only 128 shots, including an 8-under 62 in the second round to set the course record at Bellerive. He hit 24 consecutive fairways, a streak that ended in the twilight on the 18th hole as focus wavered and he made bogey.

Above all, he gave himself a chance to win.

"My goal was to get myself into position to win the golf tournament," Furyk said. "And I did that."

It seemed like it took forever.

The best part of this long day was that he finished, shooting 66 in the afternoon to complete 54 holes at 12-under 198 for the clubhouse lead. Camilo Villegas, who led by one shot after 36 holes with a 66 in the morning, also was at 12 under and had five holes remaining.

Villegas will be among 23 players who have to return Sunday morning to complete the third round in a tournament twice interrupted by weather. Rain kept the BMW Championship from starting until Friday, and the plan for everyone to play 36 holes on Saturday was disrupted by a 90-minute fog delay in the morning.

But it was packed with all kinds of drama.

Sergio Garcia made the first hole-in-one of his professional career, a 5-iron from 205 yards on the third hole in the morning that put him into the mix. Bart Bryant made an ace in the afternoon, on No. 13, four holes after learning he had been docked two shots in a bizarre penalty that basically amounted to him opening his mouth.

Martin Laird tamped down his own pitch mark on the fringe of the 16th green during the second round, which he was not supposed to do because it was in the line of Bryant's ball in the rough. The fact Bryant said, "Yes" when Laird asked if it was in his line meant Bryant was penalized because he allowed his line to be improved.

Laird was not disqualified because it was not his intent to help Bryant, who chipped well over the mark.

Asked if he should have been penalized, Bryant said, "Yes, because I broke the rule." He was more concerned that Laird, a rookie from Scotland who needs to finish this tournament to secure his PGA Tour card, was not disqualified.

Crazy stuff? No doubt.

Much more steady was Furyk, who hit 24 consecutive fairways off the tee until he started to tire at the end of a long day and found the rough on the 18th hole. He could not advance it to the green, came up short with a wedge and was thrilled to sink a tricky 5-footer for bogey.

"I'm tired," Furyk said. "I like the idea of getting some sleep."

Villegas is keen to get his first PGA Tour victory to accompany his marketing appeal, and this is the second straight week he'll have that opportunity. At the Deutsche Bank Championship, he was one shot out of the lead going into the final round until Vijay Singh closed with a 63 to win by five shots.

The 26-year-old Colombian turned potential trouble into determination.

Sailing along in the morning, Villegas four-putted for double bogey on the ninth hole—the final three putts were inside 4 feet—and he was steaming when he left the green.

But the answer was swift—two straight birdies—and Villegas added one more from 12 feet on the 18th hole to take the lead into the third round. The tour did not make new pairings with hopes of finishing, so Furyk managed to finish 54 holes well ahead of Villegas.

"I'm feeling good," Villegas said. "I'm enjoying playing golf right now. I'm playing pretty good. I'm rolling in some great putts, and I'm excited about tomorrow."

Brian Gay was 10 under with three holes to play. Anthony Kim, already a two-time winner on the PGA Tour this year, was at 9 under with one hole to play. Right behind at 8-under 202 was a group that included K.J. Choi and D.J. Trahan, who was passed over as a Ryder Cup pick earlier this week, his final-round 80 at the TPC Boston not helping his cause.

Phil Mickelson was 7 under and had faced a 20-foot birdie putt on the par-5 eighth hole, his 17th.

Furyk has not won since the Canadian Open last year, and he has not even led after any round since then. He has been steady and has done everything but win.

It didn't appear this would be the week when he was 1 under for the tournament on the back nine of his second round. Everything changed when he holed a wedge from 114 yards for eagle, then polished off his round with five straight birdies, none longer than 15 feet.

"Through 10 (holes), I probably didn't see a 62 coming," Furyk said. "And then you hole out a wedge and a whole bunch of putts go in. I was real happy about the way I hit it."

After a short break for lunch, he birdied the first hole and kept finding fairways. Furyk had warned at lunch that the hardest part of the 36-hole day is the final nine, and he was right.

He didn't swing through a 5-wood to the 235-yard 16th, and had to save par from the bunker with a 12-foot putt. Then came his only missed fairway of the third round on the final hole, but the determined, quiet fist pump when he sank the bogey putt spoke volumes.

"Although it was a bogey, I ended on a good note," he said.

Ramirez homers, drives in 5 as Dodgers beat Arizona

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Arizona Diamondbacks gave Manny Ramirez three chances to hurt them and he came through twice for the Los Angeles Dodgers to win 7-2 in the National League on Saturday.

Ramirez hit a three-run homer in the fifth inning to break a scoreless tie and added a two-run double in the sixth, helping the Dodgers replace the Diamondbacks in first place in the NL West for the first time since April 4.

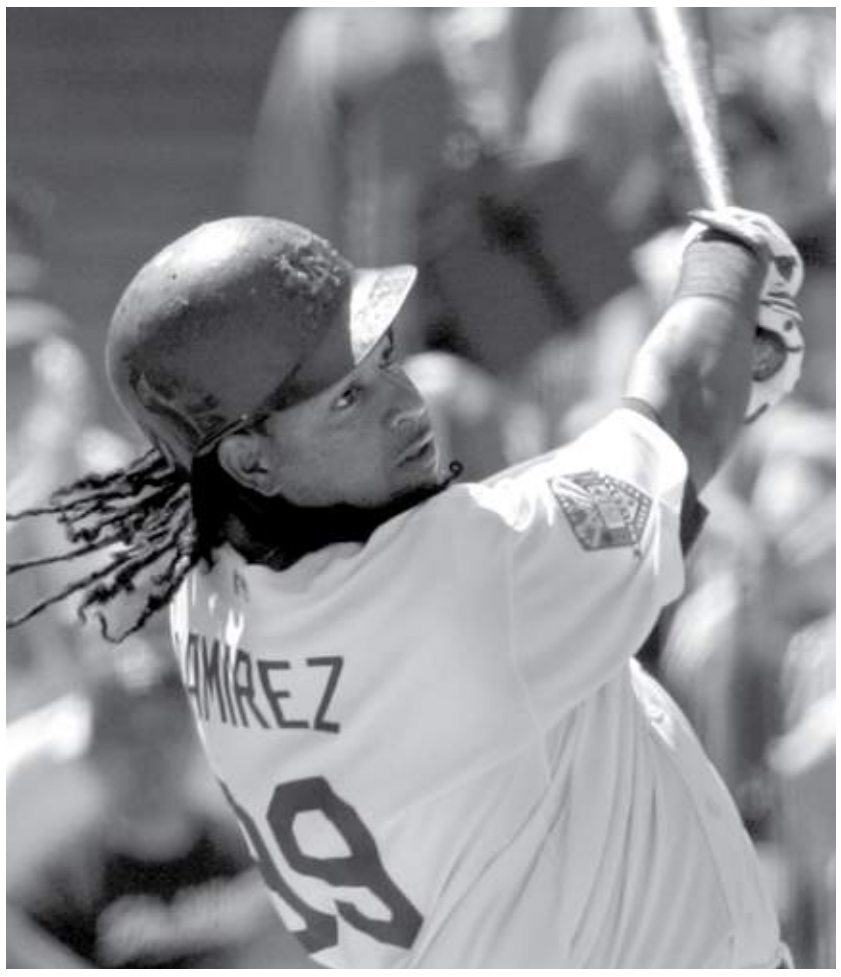
Chad Billingsley (14-10) took a shutout into the seventh for Los Angeles, which won its seventh straight.

Webb (19-7) issued a career-high six walks while failing in his third attempt to reach 20 wins for the first time.

It was the third time in Coors Field history that a pitcher threw a one-hitter or better, after Pat Rapp of the Florida Marlins on Sept. 17, 1995, and Hideo Nomo of the Los Angeles Dodgers on Sept. 17, 1996.

Reggie Abercrombie was 3-for-4 with two doubles for the Astros.

Jeff Francis (4-9) allowed two runs and seven hits over 6 1-3 innings.



AP

The Los Angeles Dodgers' Manny Ramirez hits a three-run home run against Arizona Diamondbacks starter Brandon Webb in the fifth inning of a National League baseball game in Los Angeles Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008.

Brewers 1, Padres 0

At Milwaukee, Ben Sheets pitched a five-hitter for his career-high 13th win as Milwaukee beat San Diego.

Sheets struck out seven in his fourth career shutout—third this season—and 18th career complete game.

Sheets outpitched Padres ace Jake Peavy (9-10), who allowed a run and five hits with four walks in seven innings. It was just the third time this season in 25 starts that Peavy walked four or more batters.

Prince Fielder's RBI double in the third accounted for the only run for the Brewers.

Cubs 14, Reds 9

At Cincinnati, Alfonso Soriano homered three times at the top of Chicago's retooled batting order, and the first-place Cubs emerged from their longest losing streak, ending a six-game slide with a win over Cincinnati.

Soriano hit two solo homers off rookie Johnny Cueto (8-13), then connected for a three-run shot off Jared Burton, sending a two-strike pitch deep into the seats in left field. Soriano resisted tens of thousands of Cubs fans who wanted him to take a curtain call—bad form on the road—but briefly tipped his cap when he went back to left field.

The third three-homer game of Soriano's career got the Cubs' offense rolling. Mark DeRosa added a three-run drive and Jason Marquis (10-8) had a solo shot as Chicago piled up a season-high five homers. Derrek Lee had four hits on his 33rd birthday.

The Cubs pulled ahead 9-1, substituted for many of their starters, then held on. Cincinnati's Jolbert Cabrera hit his first career grand slam in the ninth.

Cardinals 5, Marlins 3

At St. Louis, Albert Pujols hit a two-run home run and Todd Wellemeyer pitched a season-high eight innings to help St. Louis beat Florida.

Pujols hit his 31st home run of the season in the first off Scott Olsen (6-10) to give the Cardinals a 2-0 lead.

Wellemeyer (12-6) gave up five hits and struck out seven.

Felipe Lopez drove in two runs for the Cardinals.

Astros 2, Rockies 0

At Denver, Roy Oswalt threw a one-hitter and Hunter Pence hit a two-run home run to help Houston beat Colorado.

Roy Oswalt (14-9) struck out six, walked two and hit two batters. He threw 102 pitches and gave up only a leadoff single to Brad Hawpe in the fifth inning.

Nationals 8, Braves 5, 10 innings

At Atlanta, Ryan Langerhans hit a 10th-inning homer, Washington's fifth of the game, and it recovered from blowing a two-run lead in the ninth.

The Nationals matched their season high for homers, including two by Elijah Dukes. Langerhans' go-ahead shot in the 10th off Mike Gonzalez (0-2) was his second this season, both as a pinch hitter.

Dukes had four hits, including a run-scoring single in the Nationals' three-run 10th inning, and drove in three runs.

The Braves rallied from a 5-3 deficit against Joel Hanrahan in the ninth. Kelly Johnson tied the game with a bases-loaded double, but the drive bounced over the wall for a ground-rule double, preventing the winning run from scoring.

Giants 7, Pirates 6

At San Francisco, Rich Aurilia hit one of three Giants home runs as San Francisco finally beat Pittsburgh at home.

Scott McClain homered for the second time in four games and Nate Schierholtz hit his first career home run to help the Giants snap a seven-game losing streak at home against the Pirates. The Giants hadn't beaten the Pirates at AT&T Park since June 8, 2006.

Bengie Molina had three hits for San Francisco.

Blue Jays 7, Rays 4

At Toronto, Gregg Zaun hit a game-ending grand slam in the 13th inning and the Toronto Blue Jays beat the Tampa Bay Rays 7-4 on Saturday to extend their season-high winning streak to seven.

Lyle Overbay added two solo homers for Toronto, which matched its longest winning streak since Sept. 22-29, 2002.

The AL East-leading Rays, who entered with a 2 1/2 -game advantage over Boston, have lost four of five. The Red Sox carried a four-game winning streak into their matchup with Texas on Saturday night.

Rangers 15, Red Sox 8

At Arlington, Texas, Tim Wakefield, pitching his 500th game for Boston, allowed seven runs in a span of nine batters in the second inning, and Texas ended Boston's four-game winning streak.

Boston stayed 2 1/2 games behind AL East-leading Tampa Bay, which lost at Toronto earlier Saturday when Gregg Zaun hit a grand slam in the 13th inning. The Red Sox remained 5 1/2 games ahead of Minnesota in the wild card race.

White Sox 7, Angels 6, 15 innings

At Chicago, Jim Thome homered in the 15th inning to pass Mickey Mantle on the career list and give Chicago a victory over Los Angeles that extended its AL Central lead.

Thome's 537th home run came off Justin Speier (1-8) and put him in sole possession of 14th place. The White Sox moved 2 1/2 games in front of second-place Minnesota with their third consecutive victory and second in a row over the Angels in this showdown of division leaders.

Tigers 6, Twins 4

At Minneapolis, Curtis Granderson and Magglio Ordonez each hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning and Detroit battered Minnesota's struggling bullpen to rally for a win.

After relievers took six of the nine losses on their 14-game road trip that mercifully ended this week, the Twins watched yet another late lead vanish when manager Ron Gardenhire walked to the mound to replace starter Scott Baker with one out and one on.

Yankees 7, Mariners 4

At Seattle, Bobby Abreu homered and drove in three runs, Jason Giambi also connected and New York rallied for five runs in the seventh inning to beat Seattle.

One night after Brandon Morrow held them hitless for 7 2-3 innings in his first major league start, the Yankees overcame four RBIs by Seattle's Raul Ibanez to move within 7 1/2 games of Boston in the AL wild-card standings.

New York, which has reached the postseason in 13 consecutive years, has 20 games remaining. Sixteen of those are against teams that entered Saturday at or above .500.

Royals 3, Indians 1

At Kansas City, Missouri, Gil Meche gave up three hits in seven innings to win for the first time in more than a month, and Kansas City beat Cleveland.

The Indians lost on the road for the first time since Aug. 6 at Tampa Bay, snapping a 10-game winning streak away from home.

Meche, who was 0-1 with four no-decisions since an Aug. 4 win over Boston, struck out 10, matching his season high and bringing his strikeout total to a career-high 158—the third straight year he has fanned at least 150. Meche (11-10) yielded one run and walked two.

Athletics 5, Orioles 1

At Baltimore, Jack Cust hit two solo home runs, Greg Smith pitched seven shutout innings and Oakland handed Baltimore its eighth straight loss.

Jack Hannahan also homered for the A's, who have won two in a row for only the second time since the All-Star break.

The game was supposed to be the latter part of a split doubleheader, but the afternoon contest was wiped out by rain, courtesy of Tropical Storm Hanna. No makeup date was announced.

Still a rookie, Oden joins others for orientation

RYE BROOK, N.Y. (AP)—He was drafted more than 14 months ago, and even then he looked too old to be a first-year player, so it's easy to forget that Greg Oden is technically a rookie.

Sidelined all season after knee surgery, the top pick in the 2007 draft never got to compete with No. 2 selection Kevin Durant for the Rookie of the Year award. So he's eligible to win it this year, and that's one of his goals.

"I hope so," Oden said Thursday. "I'm working for it."

The Portland center definitely feels like a newcomer this week, joining a number of first-year players in the league's rookie transition program, a four-day event where players are counseled on issues they will face on and off the court.

Players are given three years to complete the program, in case they are unavailable in the summer before they enter the NBA. Oden couldn't come last year because it started just days after he had microfracture surgery on his right knee.

He finally began taking part in 5-on-5 drills last week, playing twice with his Trail Blazers teammates, and seemed pleased with his progress.

"When I first came back to Portland, I came back about three weeks ago, and I was a little bit nervous getting in there and starting working out with the guys," Oden said. "I was nervous about how I was going to play, but the more I got to playing, it's just about going out there and playing the game I love, so it's not really anything to be nervous about."

For now, he doesn't think the Blazers will let him do too much more.

"I don't think they're going to do that until the season starts," he said. "They're trying to make sure nothing happens, so keeping me on a tight rope right now."

Oden has already experienced plenty in the NBA, traveling with the Blazers on three long road trips last season. He said he's learned much more in the transition program, such as the services provided by the players' association and some financial lessons.

"I really don't know everything that went on, so I got to see some things," Oden said. "I know a couple of things that go on, but to really hear about it and all the situations while being here is good for me."

Oden and the rest of the participants saw a quick lesson in NBA discipline Wednesday when former Kansas stars Mario Chalmers and Darrell Arthur were sent home on the first day of the program for violating unspecified league rules.

Mike Bantom, the NBA's senior vice president of player development, said young players are going to make mistakes, which is why there is such a focus on finances. Even a first-round pick like Oden is only guaranteed a two-year contract at the start of his career, so players are cautioned not to blow it all too quickly.

"Be accountable for your own finances, don't rely on an agent or any one person to manage your money, because ultimately it's going to be your responsibility," Bantom said. "It's going to be your issue and you can't say, 'Well, I left it up to him.'"

Players also got a lecture Thursday from former Cavaliers and Hornets coach Paul Silas, who while reminding them of the challenges rookies face pointed out that he didn't even start Baron Davis, then a No. 3 overall pick, in Charlotte because he didn't think the point guard came into the league with a good enough shot.

Oden, growing out his beard and looking far older than his 20 years, is already aware there are no guarantees. Still, he won't have to worry about playing time once he's fully recovered.

"It took a couple of days, but it felt good," he said of facing live competition again. "The second day it felt a lot better, but I'm still not quite back yet."

Sta. Lucia leaves for US training

MANILA, Philippines—Without a major draftee, reigning Philippine Cup champion Sta. Lucia Realty will try to improve through hard training in the US, pitching camp under coach Kevin Barbosa in Boston before going through a different group of trainers in New Hampshire.

The Realtors leave for the U.S. Thursday, dropping by San Francisco first for a four-day holiday as part of their bonus in winning the 2007-08 All-Filipino tourney.

"Pagkatapos ng four-day holiday, bubugbugin na namin sa training. We thought that's the only way para makasabay kami sa mga kalaban na halos lahat nag-improve ang lineup through the Draft," said Sta. Lucia top official Buddy Encarnado, awarded as Executive of the Year by the PBA scribes in their annual awards Tuesday.

The Realtors actually picked two players in Chito Jaime and Kelvin Gregorio in last Sunday's draft exercise at the Market! Market! in Taguig.

"They (Jayme and Gregorio) have to earn their spots because our old reliable relievers are still there. And we're investing on our old players by sending them to training in the U.S.," said coach Boyet Fernandez, also an awardee as Best Coach in the PBAPC bash.

Fernandez and Encarnado said the team will still revolve around senior players Dennis Espino and Marlou Aquino.

"They are still vital cogs to our team and unless we find others who are capable of replacing them, they will continue to play for us," said Encarnado.

The 35-year-old Aquino's old contract expired last month and that of Espino, 34, ends Dec. 31. Encarnado bared a new contract has been given Aquino which will end after the season while that of Espino will easily be renewed.

Meanwhile, Talk n Text has also signed up No. 4 pick Rob Reyes to an P8.7-million contract for three years—the same maximum deal gotten by Gabe Norwood, Solomon Mercado and Jared Dillinger.

At Purefoods, team manager Alvin Patrimonio said draftees Beau Belga and Jonathan Fernandez also have to earn their slots.

Patrimonio said James Yap, Kerby Raymundo, Enrico Villanueva, Chico Lanete, Roger Yap, Jondan Salvador and Peter June Simon are the only players assured of slots in the team thus far.

Being considered are free agents Chad Alonzo and Al Vergara. Retiring at the end of the 2007-08 season were Rey Evangelista and Noy Castillo. ***(www.pba.com.ph)***

Solar Sports to launch high-tech PBA telecast

MANILA, Philippines—A fresh audio-visual look is in store for televiewers as Solar Sports embarks on a high-tech coverage of the PBA's 34th season starting Oct. 4 with the goal of taking the telecast to the next level.

Solar chief operating officer Peter Chanliong assured PBA chairman Joaqui Trillo, outgoing chairman Tony Chua, commissioner Sonny Barrios, executive director Rickie Santos, media bureau chief Willie Marcial and finance manager Jimmy Sunglao in a meeting at the network headquarters in Salcedo Village, Makati, the other day that the coverage will be "second to none."

Solar and the PBA formalized their three-year contract in a signing ceremony during the meeting. Solar was represented by chairman William Tieng and president Wilson Tieng.

Solar vice president for sales and marketing Jude Turcuato said the philosophy of "mass follows class" will be adopted in bringing the coverage to a level where market segments converge at the top. He described the job of the commentators as "aspirational," challenging the on-camera talents to deliver a high-quality performance that the country's No. 1 sports entertainment vehicle deserves.

Solar vice president for production Erick Tam said the company invested at least P20 Million for new equipment in a bold attempt to reach the standards of the NBA. A typical game will now be covered by six to seven brand-new Sony D55 digital cameras and two ENG Panasonic P2s. ***(www.pba.com.ph)***

NO CNMI

From Page 28

Golf is the third association that had shown an interest in competing in the Cook Islands, but the sport's representative had been absent from NMASA's meetings in the past months and has yet to inform White of their commitment to the Games.

White will be leaving for the Cook Islands later this month for the Pacific Games Council General Assembly and he needed to inform the organizing committee about the status of the CNMI's participation in the Mini Games.

Next year's Mini Games will run from Sept. 21 to Oct. 2 with 19 island-nations committing to send delegates.

The host had only lined up 15 events for the Games due to lack of facilities. The list include athletics, boxing, body building, golf, lawn bowls, netball, rugby 7's, rugby league, sailing, squash, table tennis, touch, triathlon, canoeing, and weightlifting.

The Cook Islands have only two main sports facilities, namely the Tereora National Stadium and the Raemaru Sports Ground.

A third one is under construction after the organizing committee secured funding for an indoor stadium at Tereora. The indoor stadium is expected to be completed in June next year.

Meanwhile, NMASA has a new vice president in tennis' Jeff Race, who replaced Michael Stewart.

Stewart, who was representing the Saipan Swim Club, left the island in July to coach a team in News Mexico.

The Cook Islands will become the only country to host the Mini Games for the second time, after it hosted the event in 1985.

Honiara, Solomon Islands hosted the first in 1981; Nuku'alofa, Tonga in 1989; Port Vila, Vanuatu (1993), Pago Pago, American Samoa (1997), Kingston, Norfolk Island (2001): and Koror, Palau (2005).

Wallis and Futuna won the right to host it in 2013.

New Caledonia dominated the 2005 Palau Mini Games with a 56-29-27 gold-silver-bronze tally.

The CNMI, which was anchored by swimming sensation Nina Mosley, managed to win four gold, 12 silver and seven bronze medals for 11th place among the 19 countries and territories that participated. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

HEO

From Page 28

cially, mentally because I rested for two months," Heo said.

The 16-year-old netter rarely played in tournaments here, wanting to reserve his strength for future off-island events. He went to Korea and New Caledonia before going to Fiji for the 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships.

He did not do well either in Korea and when he went to New Caledonia, he suffered an injury forcing him to relax a bit heading to Fiji.

CNMI coach Jeff Race and Mayuko Arriola even had to play a couple of games with Heo to get him back into form for the POJC. Heo eventually lost to a much fitter Lorenzo Pineda of Vanuatu in the boys' 18-and-under finals.

The MHS students stayed a few more weeks in Fiji to prepare for the tournaments in Japan. Tournament 1 was played in the last week of August and Heo was joined in Japan by trainer Philippe Poignon, who worked for the French Tennis Federation training junior players in France and New Caledonia.

"I worked very hard with Philip to get back in shape. I got a lot fitter, but I don't think my mental side was prepared for the tough matches in Japan," Heo said.

"It was really hard trying to stay focus and play when you are extremely nervous," he added.

Heo said it is very important to be prepared physically and mentally every game.

"Once I return to Saipan I will work harder so next time I go to Japan, I will do better," said Heo, who was scheduled to return on Saipan yesterday.

Heo is planning to join to more ITF-sanctioned events in November and December in the Philippines.

The tournaments he joined in Korea, New Caledonia, and Japan allowed Heo to get ITF Junior ranking points. After the first tournament in Japan, Heo was ranked No. 1561 in singles.

SPEARFISHING

From Page 28

Asai recalled how their training helped the duo a lot in bringing the giant fish to the surface after an hour of struggle in a cave about 120 feet away from their boat.

He said he they would like to share this experience because it would also help other spearfishing enthusiasts on how to be safe underwater if they know how to follow the rules.

The duo is offering safety rules presentation as part of their desire to help locals improve the sports of spearfishing on Saipan.

"We want to build a strong competition among the locals," Asai said.

Asai wrote in an email how he caught the mamulan as it struggled in 120 feet of water and his gun stuck on top of a cave with a depth of 100 feet.

"I had to dive angle and after I took out the gun, I needed to fight with the down current. I got blackout right after I reached the surface but my partner, Felix, picked me up," Asai said.

They finally brought the mamulan to their boat after 40-50 minutes of struggle.

"I felt MASC safety rules (one up, one down and much more!) are very important again and hoping that all the fishermen follow them for their own and their partners' safety," Asai noted.

He said that MASC is happy to relay their experiences about fishing and real marine life for younger generations.

Interested schools may contact Morito Asai at 483-7625.

SOUTHERN

From Page 28

Two other Sonics players scored in double figures, giving coach Jesse Tudela more options on offense after the departure of main gunner of Manuel Ajoste. Tristan Ecalnea, who fired 23 points in the Sonics 71-56 hammering of the Chalan Kanoa Saints, had another impressive game, nailing 12 markers. Manuel's younger brother, Bryan chipped in 11, while the rest of the Sonics bench combined for 23 markers.

The Suns' Anthony Salas drilled eight points off the bench and was the only second stringer on coach Kuki Pangelinan's roster to make it into the scoreboard.

Jimmy Brel led the Suns with 14 points, making all of them in the second half, but these were not enough to prevent his team from dropping to a 0-2 record. Josh Kiyoshi added 13.

The Suns played with only eight players and drew points from only six, as they were clearly overpowered by the much deeper lineup of the Sonics.

The lead put the Sonics two wins ahead of second placer the G-Rollers I, who is the only other unbeaten team in the 18-and-under league.

The CNMI Junior Nationals are slowly working their way up to the ladder, having won two of their last three games to claim the No. 3 spot.

In fourth place are the Kotenders, who dropped two of their last four games, followed by the G-Stars (0-2), Suns (0-2) and the G-Rollers II (0-3).

Sonics 82 – Hocog 14, Galarse 13, Ecalnea 12, Ajoste 11, Salas 7, Chan 6, Villanueva 5, Dela Cruz 5, Cadiang 5, Salem 2.

Suns 52 – Brel 14, Kiyoshi 13, A. Salas 8, M. Lisua 6, R. Lisua 5, Yamada 5.

Scoring by quarters: 36-25, 82-52.

Referees: Gilbert Espinosa and Arnold Mesa.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	85	55	.607	–
Boston	83	58	.589	2 1/2
New York	76	66	.535	10
Toronto	75	66	.532	10 1/2
Baltimore	63	78	.447	22 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	80	61	.567	–
Minnesota	78	64	.549	2 1/2
Cleveland	68	72	.486	11 1/2
Detroit	68	74	.479	12 1/2
Kansas City	61	80	.433	19

West Division

Los Angeles	85	56	.603	–
Texas	70	73	.490	16
Oakland	65	77	.458	20 1/2
Seattle	55	86	.390	30

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

New York	79	62	.560	–
Philadelphia	77	64	.546	2
Florida	72	70	.507	7½
Atlanta	62	81	.434	18
Washington	55	88	.385	25

Central Division

Chicago	86	56	.606	–
Milwaukee	82	60	.577	4
St. Louis	76	66	.535	10
Houston	75	67	.528	11
Cincinnati	63	79	.444	23
Pittsburgh	60	81	.426	25½

West Division

Los Angeles	72	70	.507	–
Arizona	71	70	.504	½
Colorado	67	76	.469	5½
San Francisco	61	80	.433	10½
San Diego	54	88	.380	18

Yesterday's Games

Oakland at Baltimore, ppd. rain, 1st game
Oakland 5, Baltimore 2, 2nd game
Toronto 7, Tampa Bay 4, 13 innings
Detroit 6, Minnesota 4
Chicago White Sox 7, L.A. Angels 6, 15 innings
Kansas City 3, Cleveland 1
Texas 15, Boston 8
N.Y. Yankees 7, Seattle 4
Philadelphia at N.Y. Mets, ppd., rain
L.A. Dodgers 7, Arizona 2
Milwaukee 1, San Diego 0
Washington 8, Atlanta 5, 10 innings
Chicago Cubs 14, Cincinnati 9
St. Louis 5, Florida 3
Houston 2, Colorado 0
San Francisco 7, Pittsburgh 6

BMW CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

ST. LOUIS (AP)–Scores Saturday from the BMW Championship, a $7 million (4.9 euro-million) U.S. PGA Tour event at 7,456-yard, par-70 Bellerive Country Club Course:

PARTIAL THIRD ROUND

Jim Furyk	70-62-66	198
K.J. Choi	70-68-64	202
D.J. Trahan	71-63-68	202
Aaron Baddeley	71-64-67	202
Stephen Ames	68-69-66	203
Angel Cabrera	69-69-66	204
Justin Leonard	69-67-68	204
Hunter Mahan	69-67-68	204
Tommy Armour III	71-64-69	204
Sergio Garcia	68-68-69	205
Lucas Glover	68-68-69	205
Rory Sabbatini	72-66-67	205
Bart Bryant	69-68-69	206
Dean Wilson	69-71-66	206
Trevor Immelman	69-67-70	206
Kevin Streelman	70-68-69	207
Geoff Ogilvy	69-71-67	207
Robert Allenby	71-68-68	207
Boo Weekley	71-65-71	207
Charley Hoffman	68-71-68	207
Mathew Goggin	70-71-67	208
Ben Curtis	70-70-68	208
Steve Marino	69-69-70	208
Johnson Wagner	72-69-67	208
Eric Axley	70-69-70	209
Adam Scott	69-71-69	209
Ken Duke	70-72-67	209
Ben Crane	70-70-69	209
Jay Williamson	68-69-72	209
Jonathan Byrd	71-68-71	210
Scott Verplank	73-69-68	210
Vijay Singh	70-70-71	211
Kevin Sutherland	70-73-68	211
John Mallinger	71-65-75	211
Mike Weir	69-72-71	212
Padraig Harrington	69-71-72	212
Carl Pettersson	72-70-70	212
Nicholas Thompson	70-73-70	213
Woody Austin	69-71-73	213
Brandt Snedeker	69-77-67	213
Heath Slocum	71-73-70	214
Ryuji Imada	72-70-72	214
John Senden	69-73-73	215
Mark Wilson	69-75-71	215
Martin Laird	69-70-76	215

Note: Play suspended due to darkness with 23 players not finishing. Round will be completed on Sunday.

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

Rotary Standings

Southern Sonics	4	0
G-Rollers I	2	0
CNMI Jr. Nationals	2	1
Kontenders	2	2
San Antonio Sixers	1	0
G-Stars	1	2
Suns	0	2
C.K. Saints	0	2
G-Rollers II	0	3

The Week in Sports

Macaranas, Ebert-Santos, Carey, Low T are week's best

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Three athletes and one team were worth mentioning in last week's headlines for making the CNMI proud with their impressive performance in off-island tournaments.

Let's start with the youngest—10-year-old golf wiz R.J. Macaranas, who recorded a milestone in the Long Beach Junior Golf in California.

Macaranas earned a slot to the "Elite 10" Club of LBJC after lowering his handicap from 12 to 10 at the end of his summer training.

The club is reserved for teenagers, thus making it to the list was a big accomplishment in the young career of Macaranas.

R.J.'s parents, Richard and Becky, hail from Saipan and their son had represented the CNMI in a world championship event in the mainland.

Anicia Santos was born on Saipan, but left the island when she was about to turn 10-years-old.

The 19-year-old daughter of Roque and Christine Ebert-Santos thought she would never leave the island she loves so much. But when she did, she never expected to be where she is right now—playing for the volleyball team of the California Polytechnic State University in San Luis, Obispo and aiming to join the U.S. National Team.

The Mustangs are part of the NCAA Division I and is ranked No. 14 this season.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
R.J. Macaranas representing the CNMI in a world junior championship event last year.

Before playing for the Mustangs, Anicia joined the U.S. National Youth Team in its southeastern Europe tour, battling spikers from Slovenia and Serbia. She was a starter for the youth team when they played the national youth squads of Croatia and Slovenia. The U.S. volleybelles won both matches.

Once her playing years in college is over, Santos is hoping to join the AVP Tour and play in the Olympics if she makes it to the U.S. National Team.

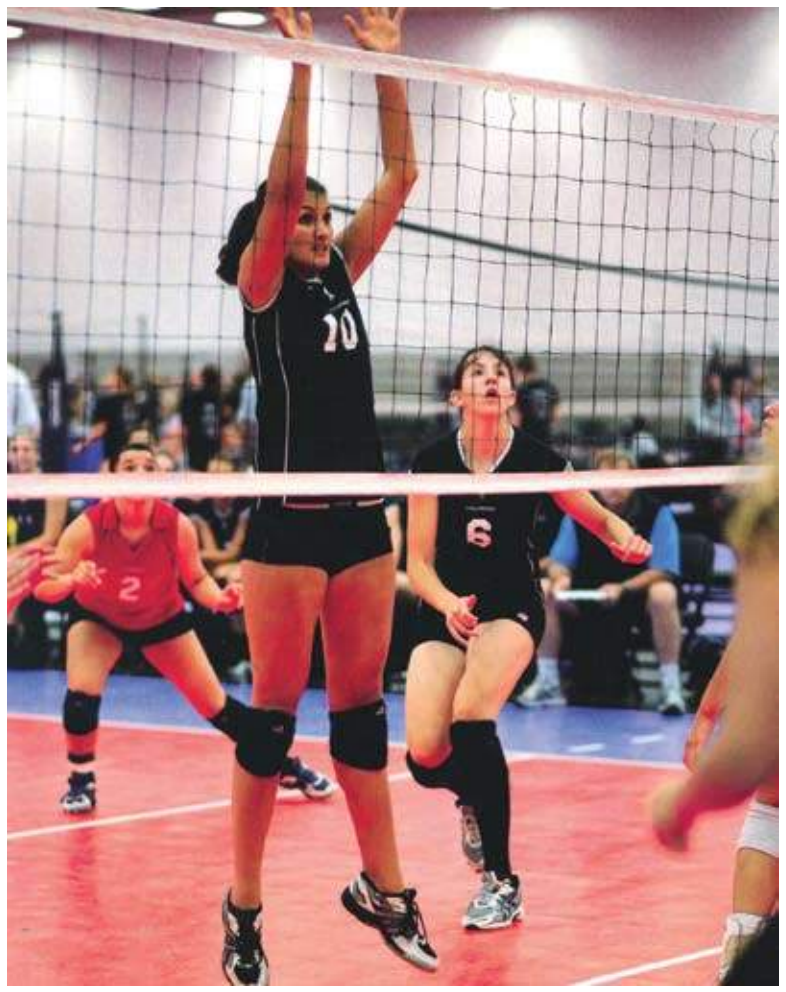
Saipan-based triathlete Mieko Carey finished XTERRA Japan in "Cinderella-liked" fashion, only this time she lost both shoes.

Carey had to complete the remaining bike and the entire run legs without her broken shoes, and under a cold weather and muddy course in Marunuma, which has an altitude of 1,500m

Low T, which was composed of Saipan players who are now based from various states in the U.S., prevailed in the 4th Annual Goodwill CNMI Labor Day Softball Tournament last month. Low T defeated Chamlu from Washington State in the finals.

In local action, two teams topped separate tournaments with Captain Morgan's ruling the 2008 NMIFA Fall Co-Ed League and Northern Marianas College claiming the pennant in the Inaugural PTI Inter-Government/Business Basketball League.

Captain Morgan's defeated Greg and Mel's Friends, 2-1, in the winner-take-all finale of the annual league.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Anicia Santos in action during the 2008 Junior Olympics Girls Championships.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Saipan-based slugger, Manny Sablan, right, join organizers and participants in the 4th CNMI Labor Day Softball Tournament in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Above, NMC's Jerry Diaz, back, tries to steal the ball from Autonomous' Chris Camacho during their game in the PTI caging.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Above right, The Southern Sonics' Manuel Ajoste, Jr. goes for a shot against the CNMI Junior Nationals' Allen Moses during their game in the Rotary caging.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Right, Mieko Carey, left, poses with 2008 XTERRA Saipan Championship winner Renata Bucher and two other Japanese triathletes.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mieko Carey, right, and a fellow triathlete with Carey's broken sole.

NMC took the pennant without a sweat, winning its last two matches via forfeiture. The Rufino Aguon-coached squad finished the regular season with a 10-1 record tying PTI, but NMC won the tiebreak having beaten the host in the elimination round 87-82.

Southern Sonics hotshot Manuel Ajoste Jr. also left for Texas to join the U.S. Air Force. Ajoste was the Sonics top scorer in their first two games in the Rotary caging.

Janice Bungalos, who was part of a handful of players who started badminton in the CNMI, left the island, too, to join her son in the Philippines.

Macaranas, Ebert-Santos, Carey, Low T are week's best

Three athletes and one team were worth mentioning in last week's headlines for making the CNMI proud with their impressive performance in off-island tournaments.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Federer a win away from 5th straight title

Ominous clouds overhead, the sort of hard court that troubled him this season underfoot, Roger Federer sensed something Saturday he hadn't in quite a while. He was playing exactly like that guy named Roger Federer.

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No CNMI athletes in '09 Mini Games

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI is skipping next year's Mini South Pacific Games in Rarotonga, Cook Islands after failing to get commitments from three sports association which earlier signified their interests to send athletes to the regional meet.

"We're not committing athletes to the Mini Games," said Michael A. White, president of the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association during Thursday night's NMASA monthly meeting.

White presided over the meeting held at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium and asked sailing and athletics about updates on their planned participation in the Cook Islands Mini Games.

Sailing's Tony Stearns said he and wife Janet McCullough would not be able to make it to next year's Mini Games due to business and family commitments.

"My father is sick and we have to attend to business matters," Stearns told *Saipan Tribune* after the NMASA meeting.

Stearns added they found the trip to Rarotonga quite difficult and inconvenient.

Two major carriers fly to Rarotonga, namely the Air Rarotonga and Pacific Blue. There is no direct flight from Saipan to the Cook Islands. One has to go to either New Zealand or Australia first before making it to Rarotonga.

Athletics is begging off from the Mini Games for monetary reason.

See NO CNMI on Page 26

Photo shows the CNMI delegation joining the parade of nations during the opening ceremonies in the 2005 South Pacific Mini Games in Palau. CNMI's flag bearer was Amanda Johnson. The Commonwealth is not committing athletes to the Mini Games in the Cook Islands next year.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Heo shares lessons learned in Japan

INTERNATIONAL TENNIS FEDERATION

CNMI netter Ji Hoon Heo, shown here in a file photo, lost in the first round of the Hyogo International Junior Tournament 1 and 2 in Japan.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI netter Ji Hoon Heo had a forgettable debut in Japan, but he will always remember the lessons learned from the two tournaments he competed in in the Land of the Rising Sun.

Heo competed in the Hyogo International Junior Tournament 1 and 2 and lost both his opening matches. He faced Shintaro Imai in the Tournament 1 and lost in straight sets, 1-6, 3-6, two weeks ago. Last week, he dueled and bowed to No. 5 seed Shoji Hahira, 6-1, 6-1.

"I did really badly in my matches," said Heo, who came to Japan with an injury and was not in his best fighting form.

But Heo doesn't want to use these as excuses for his obscure performance in Japan, as he rested too long, forgetting how important it is to keep playing and training, especially when you are going to a tough battle.

"I did not have much confidence in all the matches I played in Japan. I was nervous every single match and I was not that prepared, espe-

See HEO on Page 26

Southern Sonics manhandle Suns to remain unbeaten

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Southern Sonics extended their winning run to four, routing the Suns, 82-52, Friday night in the Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Suns showed their brighter side only in the first half when they kept the Sonics within striking distance, trailing by only 11, 25-36.

But in the second half, the Sonics sealed the Suns' gloomy fate, pulling away en route to a 30-point demolition.

Leo Galarse led the Sonics' breakaway in the second half, scoring nine straight points in the early part of that period. He finished with 13 points and was the Sonics' second-best scorer for the night.

Augustine Hocog paced the Sonics with 14 points, making most of his contributions in the first period.

See SOUTHERN on Page 26

Spearfishing right way nets duo giant trevally

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Long-time partners Morito Asai and Felix Sasamoto used their vast experience to pull-off a giant trevally from the bottom of Cowtown during a routine spearfishing trip on Labor Day, Sept. 1.

Asai and Sasamoto are the president and vice president, respectively, of the Marianas Apnea Spearfishing Club.

The 37-lb. trevally, locally called locally as mamulan was one of the biggest fish they ever caught.

The fish was over a meter long and fed about 20 people.

Asai said there were still leftovers.

"My local friends and some tourists enjoyed the "catch of the day".

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Morito Asai poses with the 37-lb. trevally he caught with friend Felix Sasamoto last Labor Day, Sept. 1, in the waters off Cowtown in Marpi.

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